

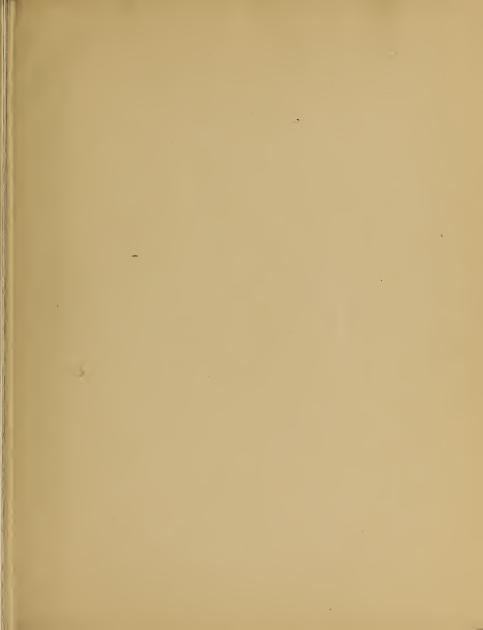


Class _ P 3 3 5 7 3

Book A4516

Copyright Nº 1912

COPYRIGHT DEPOSITE









MRS. LAMPREY AS SHE LOOKS TO-DAY

RHYMES OF A RUSTIC

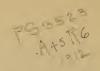
BY

MARY JOSEPHINE FOLSOM LAMPREY



THE GORHAM PRESS
BOSTON

Copyright, 1912, by Mary J. F. Lamprey All Rights Reserved



THE GORHAM PRESS, BOSTON, U. S. A.

#1,50 ©CI.A330369 RHYMES OF A RUSTIC



Rhymes of a rustic,
Penned in the pines,
Pray, ere you read them,
List to these lines!
If deep contentment,
Friends, would ye find,
Seek ye Dame Nature
Gentle and kind!



| | · ZIGE |
|--|----------|
| A Toast to New England | 13 |
| A Myth | 14 |
| A Service Divine | 16 |
| A Petition | 24 |
| Autumn | 25 |
| A Market Number of the Artificial Action of th | 28 |
| A Modern Minerva | 29 |
| An Evening Ride | 31 |
| At the Cross | 31 |
| A Night Watch. | 33 36 |
| A Heroine of the Sea. | _ |
| An Autumn Drive. | 41 |
| Among the Pines of Kearsage. | 43 45 |
| Among the Tines of Rearsage. | 45 50 |
| A Lone Wayfarer | 56 |
| A Valentine | 66 |
| An Indian Lament | 83 |
| A Christmas Carol. | |
| August | |
| A Dutiful Daughter | |
| Beginning of Labor. | 38 |
| Bob White | 39 |
| Bird Vespers | 47 |
| Benedicite | 64 |
| Bunny | 67 |
| Comrades | 16 |
| Chelone | 21 |
| Cornelia's Jewels | 27 |
| Clover Heads | 36 |
| Climbing Moosilauke | 51 |
| Crazy Mary | 60 |
| Childhood Days | - |
| Cousin Cordelia | |
| Defense of the Wildflowers | 21 |
| Death's Angel | 40 |
| Diana and Her Dogs | 52 |
| Devil's Brook | 53 |
| Dear Aunt Caroline | 63 |
| Death of Spartacus | 75 |
| Dear Purple Asters Rare | 76 |
| Drinking at the Trough. | |
| | |

| CONTENTS | PAGE |
|---|-------|
| Ere Falls the Blesséd Eventide | |
| Elegy to Time | |
| Echo Lake | |
| Faithful Unto Death | . 23 |
| Faces in the Fire | . 32 |
| February | . 35 |
| Fairy Bluets | |
| Fritz, My Collie, and I | |
| Fairyland | . 58 |
| Freedom | . 59 |
| Friendship's Flower | . 97 |
| Fallen Leaves | . 129 |
| Forsaken | |
| Flowers of the Forest | . 142 |
| Grandmother's Clock | . 24 |
| Granny Scripture | |
| Godspeed | . 107 |
| Goodby to the Birds | . 140 |
| Guess, the Vagabond | . 141 |
| Haunted Hearts | . 63 |
| Her Idea of Happiness | . 64 |
| Hymn | . 71 |
| He Heard Altho' in Prison Cell | . 92 |
| Home, Sweet Home | . 100 |
| How a Spider Made History | |
| Her Dream | |
| His Fight for Life | |
| Hunting for the Slipper | . 139 |
| Indian Baskets | |
| In the Springtime Swamp | . 67 |
| I Know a Bank | |
| I Know a Pleasant, Sunny, Pine-Grove Border | |
| Instinct | |
| In the Country Kirk | |
| July | |
| King Alfred and the Peasant | |
| Kathleen | |
| Knighthood | |
| Learn to Love the Trees! | |
| Lines to the Stormy Petrel | |
| Lay of the Meadowlark | |
| Legend of the Passion Plant | |
| Look and Learn! | |
| Lament of the River Rhine | |
| Lullaby | . 80 |
| 0 | |

| | TUOL |
|--|-------|
| Listen to the Fairies! | . 80 |
| Little Keepers of the Light | . 91 |
| Lines to Night | 103 |
| Lay of the Robber Jay | . 119 |
| Lines Written on My Birthday | |
| Lines Written on the Receipt of Some Apples | . 133 |
| My Dogs | . 13 |
| My Feathered Friends | . 15 |
| Mark, the Miner | . 17 |
| Miss Lull | . 27 |
| Massapoag | . 34 |
| My Books | . 38 |
| My Childhood's Home | 43 |
| March | |
| Mother Love | 57 |
| Mary's Little Lamb | . 60 |
| Merited Praise | |
| Miners of Cornwall | . 66 |
| May | |
| Mornings in Newmarket, Long Ago | |
| Morning on the Mountains | |
| My Boys | . 86 |
| Meeting of Antony and Cleopatra | |
| Memories | 106 |
| Miss Myers | |
| My Good Mother | |
| Needham | 53 |
| Nature's Lesson | . 85 |
| Nearer to Nature's Heart | . 88 |
| Nutting | |
| November | |
| Oh, Woodman, Spare the Trees! | . 15 |
| On the Main Truck | 45 |
| Orion | . 46 |
| Ode to the Pemigewasset | . 58 |
| Ode to the Winds | 75 |
| Oh, Worship in the Fanes of Nature! | . 89 |
| Oh, Linger, Lovely Spring! | . 92 |
| Ode to the Mountains | 95 |
| Ode to My Maple Tree | 115 |
| Ode to Disappointed Fortune Seekers from the Country | 123 |
| October | 134 |
| Open, Wide, ye Gates! | 139 |
| Pioneers | 19 |
| Perfidy's Reward | |
| | |

| 001(122(12 | PAGE |
|------------------------------------|------|
| Pique-Bois-Jaune | |
| Power of Mind Over Body | |
| Pluma's Snuff Box | |
| Peggy | |
| Rambling Thro' the Woods in Winter | . 98 |
| Robert Emmet's Last Moments | |
| Sportsman, Spare the Little Birds! | |
| Silver Wedding Bells | |
| Song of the Eglantine | |
| Song of the Watch | |
| Saved From the Sea | |
| Song of the Wooing Frogs | |
| Sunset | |
| Sleep | |
| Sweet Peas | |
| Song of the Surf | |
| Snowflakes | |
| Sonnet to a Skeleton | |
| Spondulyx | |
| Song of the Violet | |
| Sunset at the Farm | |
| Song of a Pair of Shoes | |
| Sweet Sangamon | |
| Springtime Flowers | |
| Sonnet to a Pine of the North | |
| The Wood Anemone | |
| The Empty Nest | |
| Thank God You Were Freemen Born! | |
| The Gladiator | |
| To My Paper Knife | |
| The Forage Cup | |
| The Peace Offering | |
| The Gypsy Beggar's Song | . 32 |
| To the Greenwood Come! | . 36 |
| Three Fates | |
| The Great Stone Face | |
| The Witch of Vesuvius | . 74 |
| The Brown Thrasher | . 77 |
| The Robin's Nest | |
| The Invalid's Vision | . 87 |
| The Last Request | |
| Toilers of the Sea | |
| 'Twas on a Summer's Night | . 91 |
| The Skylark's Plea | . 94 |
| The Teacher | . 95 |

| · · | LAGE |
|--|----------|
| The Old Quay | 96 |
| The Two Angels | |
| To the River Charles | 100 |
| To the Whippowill | 101 |
| The Magic Mistletoe | 102 |
| The Dance of Death | 108 |
| The Brook | III |
| To the Burning Bogs of Peat | 114 |
| To the Merrimac and the Poet Who Dwells on its Banks | 117 |
| The Cactus | |
| The Squirrel Banquet | |
| The Fiesta | 126 |
| To the Fox Sparrow | |
| Thoughts on the Autumn Season | |
| The Outlaw's Offer | |
| The Shepherd's Song | |
| The Belle of the Bog | |
| The Passing of Winter | |
| The Irish Peasant's Song. | |
| The Three Slaves | |
| Under the Trysting Tree | |
| Use the Eyes Which God Hath Given! | |
| Value More Highly Your Pearls! | |
| Verses to a Butterfly | |
| Venus | |
| Visit of the Woodpecker | |
| Voices of Nature | |
| Vesper Song | |
| Vale! | |
| What is Thine Aim? | |
| Wallace at the Battle of Stirling. | |
| Wish for a Common Vision | 40 |
| Wish for a Summer Vacation | 49 69 |
| Why a Sailor Ben Became | 09 |
| Webster's First Case | 82 |
| | |
| Where to Find God | |
| Watch | |
| When My Ship Comes In | 120 |
| Woodside Cot | 122 |
| Ye Starry Hosts of Heaven | |
| Ye Brazen Bells | 70 |







MRS. LAMPREY'S HOME, WOODSIDE COT, SHARON, MASS.

A TOAST TO NEW ENGLAND

(Suggested by a Sicilian Earthquake.)

New England with thy rugged coast, Thy granite hills of gray, Oh, let me offer you this toast, On this mid-winter's day!

Altho' the blasts are bleak and bold That beat about thy face, Altho' the fogs are chill and cold Which thy rude form embrace,

Altho' thy summer days are hot, Thy wintry seasons drear, We're very glad 'twas our sweet lot To have been born right here!

For, here, no earthquake shakes the ground On which our homesteads stand; For, here, no tidal billows bound Like demons o'er the land;

But, safe on mountain, lake or stream, Or ocean-girded bay, We'lie secure to sleep and dream From dusk to dawn of day:

God bless thee, then, New England old, Enwrapped in snowflakes white! Thy stormy skies, thy breezes bold Will vanish, soon, from sight,

When Spring, with windflowers in her hand, Upon thy hills shall tread, Close followed by a beauteous band, To wake thee from the dead!

And, then, for three short months, at most, New England, none shall know That, e'er, the wild winds lashed thy coast Or buried thee in snow,

For, streams shall sing and rills shall dance Thy smiling slopes adown, And sunbeams soft shall loving glance On leaves which once were brown!

So, tho' thy smile is short, it thrills Thy people, grown most wise, Who choose thy safe, tho' rocky hills, To those 'neath fairer skies!

THE WOOD ANEMONE

Hard by a softly murm'ring stream,
'Neath bending willows bare,
'Mong tangled boughs of budding shrubs
I found the wind-flower fair

A-trembling on its slender stalk, (Low drooping, too, its eye,) And, never, rarer loveliness I've seen below the sky:

Oh, Wood Anemone, so frail,
Thou'rt fair as Venus tall,
From out whose tears you once didst spring
In the form of a floweret small!

And, tho' Adonis is no more, And Venus quite forgot, You, far from Greece, (your happy home,) Now, beautify this spot!

Thanks, modest bloom, for all the joy You gave me, here, today, By showing me your winsome face So free from pride, alway!

MY DOGS

Seven are the dogs, in my life, I have owned; Six of these pets I have sadly bemoaned; One is yet left lonely hearthstone beside; Here, may he long, safe and happy, abide!

First of the troop was fair Flora, so white, Blotched with jet black and my childish delight, Ready, for sweets, on her tiptoes to tread; Nothing but dust is she, now, in her bed:

Second came Guess with his brown eyes, so bright, Gleaming like gems in his head, silver white, Willing and glad to be dressed, ev'ry day, Just like a child, in my doll's clothing gay,

Then, lying still as a mouse, in cart small, While him I drew round the old garden wall; Now, soft and green, lies the turf on his breast, Far, far away in the Land of the West:

Third came good Skip, a small, smart Black and Tan,
Each of his ears like a huge, flapping fan,
Always so lively, but, ready to rest,
Curled in a ball, on my lap, lightly pressed:

Next, came old Bruiser, a true canine lord, Gentle at home, but, a tiger abroad; Noticing none save his dear loved ones three; Even, today, in my mind, him I see;

Coarse, stiff and short was his thick, tawny hair; Nought in his looks, but his eyes, was there fair; Yet, his brave heart as the magnet was true; Sweet be his sleep 'neath the violets blue!

Then, there was Max, a young collie, high bred; Clear were the eyes in his finely poised head; No drink of water was given him, I wis, Good, grateful dog did not give me a kiss;

Thanking me, well, for each favor, so small, Tho' not a word could his tongue let down fall; Loving and gentle, I miss thee, today, Beautiful Max with thy manners so gay!

Next, there came Fritz, a great shepherd light brown,

Handsomest dog in our small, country town, Bearing, (as 'twere a soft plume,) his long tail Over his back as he dashed down the dale;

Scores were the rambles, o'er field and o'er hill, Fritzie and I took our leisure to fill; Patient, he'd wait while I gathered wild flowers; Happy, he'd roam, at my side, for long hours;

How eyes would gleam as he glanced at my face! How off he'd gambol with swiftness and grace! Ne'er I'll forget faithful Fritzie so dear! Soft fall the dews on his newly-made bier!

Last, but, not least, is my spaniel so black; Shining as satin is Bob's little back; Long are his ears and like paddles his feet; Soft are his eyes and his footsteps how fleet!

Dearly he loves on my dress-skirt to lie; Whene'er I leave him, how deep doth he sigh! When I return, how he barks! how he cries! Ah! Bobby Burns, thou art surely a prize!

Slowly would much of my time idle by, Cheerless I'd sit, saw I not Bob's bright eye; Soundly, securely, I sleep thro' the night, Since that I know Bobby's slumber is light;

Pert is the picture when Bob a rag white Holds in his teeth 'gainst his breast black as night, Coaxing his mistress a moment to play, When day is done and she lays work away: Dear little Bobby, my idolized pet, Nothing you do which doth cause me regret! Heaven grant that years in my cottage you stay, Stay till thy coat shall grow dingy and gray!

A MYTH

'Twas night in the hovel, poor and bare, (Which an aged couple pent,) And a chill was in the twilight air As the carlin plied her evening care By the glow the fagots lent:

A knock on the door was straightway heard, And good Baucis limped to see Who it was would have with her a word At a time when human, beast or bird In his hiding place should be:

Two travellers she found who begged for bread And a shelter from the dew; So, with joy, the dame both strangers led To some seats near by the embers red Where she'd warmed a scanty stew:

A draught of clear wine, for many a day
She had kept old age to cheer,
She brought out, in gladness, now, to lay
Before these,—her guests; for, sweet their stay
She would make while dwelt they, here:

As fast as the bowl, so small and mean,
Was drained out, the peasants spied
'Twas refilled by hands of them unseen,
And 'twas then they gazed with eyes grown keen
On the guests their hearth beside:

Two gods proved these guests they'd entertained,— Mighty Jove and Mercury, Who, no more, men's perfect likeness feigned, But, who bade the dame, as darkness waned, With her spouse, the hut to flee:

A hill, near at hand, ascended they; And, on looking backward, spied Where the town had been a lakelet lay, Their old home the only house to stay By the water's rippling tide:

And, as they bewailed their neighbors' fate,
The old sheeling, poor and low,
To a temple fair, of gorgeous state,
They saw changed by them, (their guests of late,)
In the early morning's glow:

Then, being desired by Jove of Might
Their few wants aloud to speak,
The old peasants prayed, that, in his sight,
In the temple, there, it might seem right
That they serve until too weak,

And, then, that, together, they might die, As they'd lived, united, long; In a twinkling, by the temple high Stood the pair as priests; and, by and by, At the time of vesper song,

While standing the temple fair before,
To an oak-tree turned was one;
To a lime, before the massive door,
Was the other changed; for, now, no more,
Could they toil; their tasks were done:

This tale, tho' a myth, us serves to show That to lend our aid is right, Tho', unlike this worthy pair we know, To no earthly temple do we go To serve God,—the Lord of Light!

We'll get our reward, my Friends, today, In the feel of duty done,— In the thought that what we do or say From a life of sin some soul may stay Who hath other helpers none!

OH, WOODMAN, SPARE THE TREES!

Oh, Needham Woodlands fair,
With leaf-harps softly sighing,
Where love I to repair
When Joy's within me dying,
The day, I fear,
Is very near
When I, forlorn, shall ponder
And seek, in vain,
Thy leafy fane
Where I, so oft, did wander!

Where, now, the cooling shade Allures me to thy border, Brick blocks, in rows arrayed, Shall be, erelong, wood-warder; And summer heat Shall downward beat Where vireos, now, hover, Beguiling hours By showing powers Of song to nature's lover;

'Twas only yestreen, late, That thro' thine aisles I rambled, (My spaniel for my mate,
Who, by his mistress, gamboled,)
And thro' my heart
There shot a dart
At woodman's work a-gazing,
For, there, a-ground,
Lay, scattered round,
The limbs he'd been a-razing:

Oh, Woodman, spare the trees
Where nest the hermit thrushes,—
Where softly sighs the breeze
At sight of Morning's blushes!
Thine axe delay,
In pity, pray,
The maples red from felling,
Nor take delight
The birch-blood white
To see the soil o'erwelling!

I'll say, not yet, farewell
To thee, thou forest fairest!
But, on, thro' grot and dell
I'll fare, while, still, thou bearest
Thy groves of green
Where may be seen
Rare ferns and mosses dearest,
And where my ear,
Perhaps, may hear
Sweet bird-songs, oh, the clearest!

MY FEATHERED FRIENDS

Altho' I love the spring,
With bush and blade a-budding,
With thrushes on the wing,
Their songs the air o'erflooding,
I love right well
When dale and dell
Their winter garb are wearing;
For, then, to me
I see, in glee,
My feathered friends come faring!

An acrobat, in gray,
(Who hath no fear of falling,)
The nuthatch, ev'ry day,
His nasal, "Yank!" is calling,
As, head hung down,
The tree-trunk brown
Descends he nimbly, ever,
And picks each nest,
Which doth infest
The bark, with firm endeavor:

The swift brown creeper small,
(So like the tree he favors,)
Ascends the cedar tall
And, ne'er one moment, wavers;
If 'tweren't I spy
His motions spry,
(So match the wood his feathers,)
I'd, ne'er, remark
Him on the bark,
Bugs gleaning in all weathers:

The woodpecker, red-capped,
Upon his tail sits perching
Until the trunk he's rapped
For worms, (he's, ever, searching;)
And, then, his bill,
So like a drill,
He thrusts adown, most lusty,
The suet soft
That hangs aloft
Upon the cedar rusty;

The social chickadee,
The little junco quakers,
The jays, which scream in glee,
Are, all, my solace makers;
And when the blast
Howls loud and fast,
I fling more crumbs to feed them,
And seeds I strew,
For, then, I know
My feathered friends will need them:

Wee Brothers of the Air,
My love for thee's unfailing!
I'll have o'er thee a care,
When wintry winds are wailing!
And God I'll pray
To here let stay,
(To cheer me, as he's able,)
Each feathered friend
To whom I'll lend
A morsel from my table!

A SERVICE DIVINE

It hath, long time, been my custom, (Tho' it may to you seem strange,)
As the twilight slowly deepens
Over mead and mountain range,
To betake me to my chamber
And at western window sit,
While I hold commune with nature
And with nature's God a bit:

And, perhaps, this, too, seems stranger, Tho' to me 'tis very true, That God's holy, soothing Spirit Doth my being all imbue, At this peaceful hour, more fully Than when bells for matins ring, For, I see the darkness falling From the shadow of His Wing:

Then, I know, tho' I'm unworthy,
Thro' the dark and solemn night
He will watch o'er me,—His servant,
Till the dawn of morning light;
And I feel His Arm supporting,
And I know He's with me, there,
So, I speak to Him in language
That you'd think no one would dare;

For, His Love o'erflows my being
Like the rush of rising tide,
And deep thoughts thrill thro' my bosom
Which to Him I would confide;
For, is He not my dear Father?
Then, oh, why should I have fear
To pour out my inmost yearnings
To the One who stoops to hear?

So, I, ever, shall continue
To this sacred service hold,
(When the dusky gloaming gathers
Each stray sheep to shelt ring fold,)
With the God of peace and battles,
With the God of worlds and men,
With the God who loves his children,
Who'll forgive them, once again!

COMRADES

Ride ye in autos, if ye will, Powdered with dust which nostrils fill, Over rough roadways swiftly speeding, Never the landscape even heeding, Trammelled by wraps and veils alway, Tho' it be e'er so fair a day!

Give to your friend a dappled gray! Grant us your leave to go our way Over the hills, 'mongst purpling heather, Far, far away, in autumn weather, Dog at our head,—a herald bold, Waking the echoes in wood and wold!

Never a blow, but, gentle pat Given to my steed's sleek side so fat, Only one word in his ear a-listening, Then, up the slope with dewdrops glistening, Up o'er the hills, by bosky glen, Far from the busy haunts of men!

Soft 'neath our feet the mosses lie! High o'er our heads the pine-trees sigh! Close to the mountain's breast so hardy Horse, dog and I, with footsteps tardy, Gayly will wander, comrades tried, Over the paths where shadows hide!

Over the track by flocks' feet worn, Over the path by landslides torn, Tarrying oft at fountains foaming, Lingering long when falls the gloaming, Drinking in scenes spread out so fair, Far, far below, in the frosty air!

Born kindred cronies, faith, are we,— Nag, dog and I,—a happy three,— Cob, with his speckled coat so shining, Dog, of the watchful eye, a-whining, Ready to roam, whene'er I say, Over the hills and far away!

MARK, THE MINER

At the base of yon Sierras high
Their fair foothills may be seen,
Where, in spring, a host of blossoms lie
On their thrones of mossy green:

'Mongst these hills, by springs of crystal fed, The fair Feather River flows, Ever singing 'long its sandy bed A refrain the Red Man knows:

Until three score years, about, ago, On these hills, of which I write, Undisturbed, the Indian bent his bow From the morn till dewy night:

But, besides the wigwams on the green Of fair Feather River's shore, After this, log huts were, often, seen In small groups of six or more;

And in one of these rude cabins rough
Dwelt three friends, one season fair,
Clad in miners' clothing, coarse and tough,
Over bosoms full of care;

For, these men had left their far-off home To their fortune find in gold, Having crossed the foothills and the foam Which beyond the mountains rolled: Ne'er an Indian begged these men for bread Who had been by them denied; So, in peace each slumbered in his bed By the friendly Redskin's side:

Now, it chanced the youngest man, one day, Started out to go to town For some sacks to fill with sand to lay, As a dam, the river down;

Lusty lad had barely passed eighteen, But, in mien a man was he; Dark and lustrous were the eyeballs keen Which could dance in boyish glee;

Black as night the locks in curls that fell O'er a forehead white as snow; Ruddy cheeks like roses in the dell, And a mouth like Cupid's bow;

Fleeter-footed far than foxes, he, With a heart than they more brave, As he stalked along the grassy lea With a thoughtful aspect grave;

Thro' the woods where lurked deep shadows gray, In which wily foes might hide, Thro' the meads where rang the ground-bird's lay, Hurried he with quickened stride;

For, the way was long to yonder town,— The way there and back, once more, Ere the sunset turned to gold the brown, Rugged trunks with moss grown o'er:

He had passed a stretch of hilly heath, When, before him, he espied A strange band of Redmen, armed to the teeth, On the sloping, green hillside;

To turn back would mean an instant death; To go on he must knew Mark, So, he stilled his panting, beating breath, Then, with eyes grown strangely dark,

Just as tho' to meet an Indian band
Was a most familiar sight,
Strode our handsome lad, with courage manned,
O'er the path with blossoms bright:

Like a group of statues, carved from rock, Stood the Redskins in the sun; Then, without a smile the man to mock, Slow and silent, ev'ry one

Moved a bit, dividing into two

The dense crowd, (which, first, he'd seen,) And our hero, now, with valor true, Stepped along the parts between;

Forward, straight he strode, with strength of steel, Many rods upon the track, Thinking, ev'ry second, he should feel Poisoned arrows pierce his back,

Never daring, e'en, his head to turn Till well out of danger's path, When he slightly paused, amid the fern, To glance back along the rath;

Ev'ry warrior, decked in paint and plumes, In the springtime air so warm, Gazed intent, from out the harebell blooms, At the youth's retreating form;

Pleased, no doubt, because in Mark's young face Rarest beauty they did see; More, they knew, from his calm air of grace, That no base poltroon was he:

All thro' life, Mark showed the courage rare As on that eventful day When his fearless mien and graceful air Made the foe its hand to stay:

It is years since ceased the gallant quest For the brightly gleaming gold; It is years since o'er the mountain crest Homeward hied the laddie bold:

In his native land, beside a stream, As on Feather River's shore, Mark, the Miner, sleeps, perhaps, to dream Of those thrilling days of yore.

THE EMPTY NEST

A purse-like nest, in an elm-tree bare, Swings, to and fro, in the frosty air, High o'er the village street; No tenant, there, in its halls, today, A tender love-song or paean gay Trilleth in accents sweet;

For, empty, now, is the house of hair,
Deserted long by the loving pair,
Who, on one springtime day,
With skill and care, wove with claw and bill
Until it looked as you see it, still,
Waving above the way:

'Neath bluer skies and in softer air,

In love, now, liveth the fire-bird pair,
(Singing their sweetest psalm,)
Who never think of the cosy nest,
Where, sung to sleep 'neath the mother's breast,
Safe, lay their babes from harm:

In yon low cottage, beneath the shade
The elm-tree old hath for decades made,
Dwelleth a blind man weak;
His beard is blanched and his face is white;
From eyes is banished the precious light,
Vainly, he tries to seek;

And, on him waiteth his patient wife,
As loving, now, as in early life,
Reading, at springtime noon,
Beneath the elm-tree, where, now, doth hang
The nest from which blithest carols rang
All thro' the pleasant June:

Of late, I've missed, 'neath the elm-tree bare, The blind man old, as I loitered, there; Lone, 'neath the snow, doth lie The ancient cot, with its roof moss-grown, O'er which the orioles fair have flown, Bound to the spring hard by:

Maybe, the man, like the hang-birds bright, Has left his nest, (in the wintry night, Looking so desolate,) To go to dwell in the Heavenly Lands, In Temples made without tools or hands, Where he will gladly wait

To meet the mate he long loved so dear, And wonder how she will, then, appear; For, the old eyes, long dim, More clearly see than when he was young, And heard the orioles' praises sung Up on that swaying limb!

THANK GOD YOU WERE FREEMEN BORN!

Ye, who were born in the Land of the Free, Never obliged to a king bend the knee, Always accustomed to go where ye please, Far to the North, or, to hot Southern Seas, Ne'er, will ye know how the Lord ye hath blest, Ye, who were born in the Land of the West!

If ye had seen the loved light of the day, When o'er the world the old Romans held sway, And, in the galleys a slave you had been, Bound to your bench, in the fray's direful din, Waiting for death in the fight or the wave, Then, you'd have known the hard life of a slave!

If in stern Sparta, a serf, you had dwelt, Clad in thy vestment of roughest, sheep pelt, Coiffed by the bonnet of dog-skin to show You were a Helot despised, mean and low, Owned by the state, a poor slave of the soil, Destined, forever, to delve and to toil,

Then, perhaps, then, to the gods ye'd have prayed Somewhat to soften the laws ye obeyed,—
Pleading for freedom to work when ye would,—
Freedom to wear or a cap or a hood,—
Freedom to go where thy fancy should lead,—
Freedom to live like thy master, indeed!

Fifty years, nearly, have, now, passed away Since, in his shackles, the bondman, here, lay; Now, for a shelter the sad and oppressed Seek our loved Land,—their sweet haven of rest, For, from the Lakes to the Gulf and the Sea Floats Freedom's emblem,—the Flag of the Free!

Thanks be to God for this gift, far the best Given, thro' all time, to this Land of the West,—Freedom to live as one will just as long As he his neighbor doth do not a wrong,—Ever, to dwell, whether black or white, he, Free as the wind which sweeps over the sea!

PIONEERS

On a pathway, (marked thro' the deep, dark wood By the bare epots blazed on the bark,) there stood,

On a springtime morn, (when the sun had furled His fair flag of fire, and the dew impearled

'Pon the bracken gleamed like the jewels set In some mighty emperor's carcanet,)

A stout mare whose rider his rein had drawn As across his path leapt a doe and fawn,

Bending down their backs, as, o'er bank and brae, Thro' the leafy covert they went their way:

Just behind the rider, of whom I speak, Sat a dame dark-haired and of dimpled cheek,

Whose light laugh rang out, as the deer passed by, And a clearer light burned within her eye,

As she cried, "Farewell!" from her pillion rude, To the timid elves of this solitude; Of no wondrous beauty the dame could boast, But, in courts or camps, ne'er, was given a toast

To a dame or damsel with eyes more blue Or with heart that beat with a love more true

Than this rustic lass, (made, yestreen, a bride In the south Canadian country-side,)

And who, now, this glorious morning bright, With the laddie she loved, in calm delight,

Was a-travelling on, (now, grave, now, gay,) Thro' the fragrant forest, upon her way

To the new love-cottage, the pines below, Thro' whose casements clean whisp'ring winds would blow

And near which the pewee would, doubtless, nest With her young pressed close to her dusky breast:

In a short half hour, to a grassy glade Led the winding path, where, beneath the shade

Of a spreading pine-tree, her simple home She first saw revealed 'neath the cloud-flecked dome;

Not a neighbor near, nought but woods and sky And a sparkling brooklet a-babbling by!

Down a gentle slope, some few steps away, By its banks a milch-cow in quiet lay,

Her cud chewing, there, with a lazy air, And her lustrous orbs on the youthful pair,

As, from good, old Kit, the gray mare, our lad In his brawny arms bore his bride, so glad,

O'er the rough, rude threshold and thro' the door, Like the Roman bridegrooms, in days of yore,

Lest the lass should stumble, (bad luck 'twas said,) Ere she stood inside, with the man she'd wed;

And sweet Linda looked on the log-built wall,— On the mosses stuffed in the chinks, so small,—

On the plain, pine table and chairs and bed,— On the few Delft dishes, up overhead,

Till the teardrops fell from those eyes of blue, And she laid her head on that breast, so true, Her pure heart too full to speak praises, then, To the one she deemed just the best of men:

Thus began a honeymoon, bright and fair, Long to last, but, not without toil or care,

For, the young man, here, I delineate, And the lovely Linda, his true helpmate,

Found to make a farm from the forest wild Was a work for Trojans, and not a child,

And, from early morn till the set of sun, Faithful Leonard toiled, but, was never done;

Loudly rang his axe till a woodpile tall Proudly loomed hard by the log cabin's wall;

Late and long he wrought till the stumps were fired In the clearing, (years after this, admired;)

Then, how dripped the sweat from his honest brow, As he turned the turf with his heavy plough,

And how fagged and fevered his feet, at night, As he sat at supper by candlelight!

Yet, no laggard, he! At the misty dawn, He was off to plant in his field the corn,

While the crows looked on with a harsh, "Caw! caw!"

Quite amazed at all they, that morning, saw;

And the squirrels scolded from treetops high At the sight of him, as he passed them by,

Whilst the love-song sweet of a bluebird fair Made those morning moments without compare:

And lithe Linda toiled in the cornfield, too, Helping on her husband with courage true;

When the corn had sprouted, with hoe in hand, Midst the rows the mistress did, often, stand

With her winning smile and her merry word Which the master's down-drooping spirits stirred:

As the years flew by and the toddlers came, Loving Linda sat at her quilting frame,

Or, stood, long, to weave at the lumb'ring loom, (To its fullest stretched in the one best room,)

Skimming milk and setting to rise the bread, When her spouse and babies were snug in bed;

And the raven hair thinner grew and white, And the rosy cheeks seemed to lose their light,

But, the pleasing smile, never, lost its cheer, And the soothing tones, still, were sweet to hear:

Once a month, or, so, when the work was o'er, Leonard harnessed Kit for one labor more,—

Fifteen miles and back to the store to buy, (Be the pathway clear or with snowdrifts high,)

Tea, tobacco, sugar and spice, maybe, Or some candy balls for the children wee;

'Twould be nearly midnight when came he back, Like old Santa Claus, with his pond'rous pack;

If in winter weather, waited Linda fair By the fireplace huge, in her rocking chair,

Knitting socks, perchance, by the flick'ring flame, (Which the back-log cast o'er her tired frame,)

Stopping work to hear, as she grew quite white, Howls of hungry wolves in the silent night,

With a fervent prayer for the absent one On the bridle-path with his pack and gun;

If the farmer went when the days were long,— When the air was sweet with the throstle's song,

She was wont to sit on the doorstone wide, With the cradle close, (just the door inside;)

And the bird-songs died and a silence deep Over all the landscape around did creep;

Save the whirring sound of a beetle's wing Or an owlet's cry heard she not a thing;

Or, maybe, the brook, o'er its pebbles gray, Which ceased not its ditty by night or day;

Here, she sat with never a shade of fear Till swift hoof-beats fell on her listening ear;

And the noise came nearer until, at last, Sounds of cracking boughs told the wood was past;

With a thankful heart did she, then, uprise, Looks of love a-lighting her liquid eyes, As she laid a lunch of fresh cheese and bread For the lad she, many years since, had wed,

But, for whom her heart, in or sun or storm, Throbbed, today, as then, with strong pulses warm,

And would, ever, throb till their toils were done And for both had set the all-seeing sun:

Thus it was the brave, hardy pioneer, With the helpful aid of his consort dear,

Drudged from morn till eve, in the early day, With no pleasures bright to allure their way,

Till old age flung frost on each furrowed brow, And the back was bent at the loom or plough:

Yet, we owe our towns, over all the land, To these heroes simple, and, yet, so grand,

Who laid low the forest, where lurked the bear; Who raised up the grainfields, so smiling, fair;

Honor, then, for them of the homespun suits, Of the knitted stockings and cowhide boots!

Let us thank our God that such men as these Loved their duty more than they loved their ease!

CHELONE

Oh, naughty, little nymph, who crept
One day, last summer, early,
Up here, not knowing that I kept
A saucy spaniel surly,
I guarded you, as best I might,
Until you slowly took to flight,

A-bearing on your back your home
Which you are doomed to carry,
No matter where or when you roam
Or where you choose to tarry,—
A punishment, for ages borne,
Because of gods you, once, made scorn!

I hope you gained the marsh, again,
Whence you, that morn, went creeping;
And wonder if within the fen,
Today, you're soundly sleeping
Or swimming in the streamlet clear
Which I can see from even here!

Some future day, I'll visit thee, Dear, little nymph, Chelone! And, when I come, pray, do not flee Within thy castle stony, But, look at me with thy great eyes, Which show to me you're good and wise!

I'd like to view thee in the mead; Beside the wimpling water! I'd like to know on what you feed, Slow-walking, little daughter, And, also, see how fleet thy feet When in the water, cool and sweet!

When Mercury, in years gone by,
You flung within the river,
(Because Jove's call you did defy,)
He was a gen'rous giver;
For, then, he taught you how to swim,
With speed, with gracefulness and vim!

So, Turtle, stay where you were born! Climb not yon hill of trouble, But, some sunshiny, summer morn, Don't think you're seeing double, When, looking out upon the lea, You see your old acquaintance,—me!

DEFENSE OF THE WILDFLOWERS

Ye lovers true of wildflowers fair, That deck the rocky pastures bare, Which spring, like gleaming jewels bright, On yonder barren Alpine height, Your ruthless hands, I pray ye, stay! Uproot ye not the wildflowers gay!

The lady's slipper, never found In pairs upon the leaf-strewn ground, The wood anemone, so white, That trembles in the breezes light, Oh, pluck, and fill each vase, to-day, But, root not up these wildflowers gay!

The meadow rue, (a stately queen,)
Which bows and bends in meadows green;
Blue flags that gaze, like wond'ring eyes,
From out the mead in glad surprise;
Oh, gather these in nosegays rare,
But, root not up these wildflowers fair!

The crowfoot holds her chalice up To fill with dew her golden cup; The pale corydalis that peeps O'er boulders old where lichen creeps; Go! search for these and garlands twine, But, root not up these wildflowers fine! The pink sweet-brier which leaneth low To list the wooing west wind blow; The sandwort, tiny, yet, so bold, That springs on mountain summits old; Yes, pick them all, all you can find, But, leave their roots, intact, behind!

None lives who loves not wildflowers gay! In all the world none them would slay! But, if, by the roots, ye men uptear These dryads of the forest fair, In coming years, each moor and lea A perfect wilderness will be!

Then, pluck the blooms, all love so well, Which in the woods or meadows dwell, But, leave the roots to live and grow To fair flower elves, (we all well know,) Who cheer our hearts, when all is night, With fairy forms and colors bright!

THE GLADIATOR

Soft shone the sun on the Tiber, so slow, Its yellow waves sparkling with shafts from his bow;

Sweet sang the breeze o'er the seven hills of green, Where, Rome, in her grandeur, then, lay a fair queen:

Bright gleamed each gradus, in Circus, so grand, With fairest of maidens that graced the fair land; White shimmered togas of senators old, On shoulders confined with rich fibulæ gold:

Hushed, at the blast of a bugle, the hum Of all those spectators become, as 'twere, dumb; Fixed was each eye on th' arena, so wide, Strewn over with sand, o'er which, once, ebbed the tide,

When, at a bound, leaped two men into view, In scorching sun-rays, 'neath the sky's vault of blue, Eyeing each other, with glances so fleet, From head's very crown to the soles of the feet:

One, trained to fight in the swordman's rough

Of black, flashing eye and bravado so cool, Brawny of breast and gigantic in size, Impatiently waited to strike for the prize,—

Ten thousand sesterces, silvery bright, To him fairer far than the dawn's rosy light; One, but a slave, tho' as fair as a god, With soul of a hero who spurns whip or rod, There, in the hope of sweet freedom to gain, Awaited, heart beating, the signal so vain; Then, at the sound, two sharp swords clashed and tore

Till the sand, underfoot, slipp'ry grew with red

Clear glowed the palm-branch 'fore eyes of the

And near seemed the rudis, or rough, wooden glaive, Badge of loved liberty, dear to the heart Of each human creature exposed in slave mart;

Hope gave him strength, tho' flushed cheek blanched with pain,

The ivory form ruddy grew, and reeled brain, Strength till blue eyes had begun to grow dim, When feeble and faint grew stout heart and lithe limb;

Then, in his agony, frenzy, despair, He turns those blue eyes, 'neath thick locks of light hair.

Up towards that vast, seething sea, still as death, Which waves not a fan, swings no scarf, breathes no breath;

Tho', (but a few, little seconds before,)
Loud cheer upon cheer to the welkin did soar,
Now in disgust at that slave's mute appeal,
"Thumbs up," e'en from Vestals, his death-warrant
seal;

When the last strokes have been dealt and he falls 'Pon sand, 'neath the shade of yon, steep, rocky walls.

Clearly he sees, in death vision, the prize, (For which he hath risked his young life,) now, arise;

Smiling and happy that, now, he is free, He grasps for the bauble, uprising on knee, Opening his lips, whence proceeds not a sound, Then, falling, a corpse, on the blood-sodden ground:

Rome's Colisseum, in ruins, today, Is viewed by the traveller and guide, grave or gay, Climbing the seats where reclined virgins fair, Or peering in depths which were savage beasts' lair;

Stalking thro' gates where patricians, once, strayed With consuls and quæstors, in purple arrayed; Wond'ring where tribunes and ædiles had passed, Preceded by slaves, in those passages vast;

Awe-struck and saddened this ruin, so grand,

(The greatest, most splendid of all in the land,) Still, should recall Gladiatorial Shows, The hard-hearted Romans, the slaves' wretched woes.

FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH

On a ship that hailed from Glasgow, (Ploughing thro' the waters wild Of the stormy, rough Atlantic,) Was a happy, little child

With her sire and two fine collies; And, thro' ev'ry waking hour, Mary romped with canine playmates, What tho' murky clouds did lower!

But, one day, a fearful tempest Swept the sea and billows white Rocked the vessel like a cradle, Up and down, to left and right;

And the tossing and the pitching
In the troughs of Neptune deep
Made the little lassie weary,
And she fell in that calm sleep

Whence there'll, never, be a wakening
On this side the roaring Sea,—
Not until the inky shadows,
At God's word, in terror, flee!

* * * * * * * * * * * * * *

While the pure and pallid body
In the cabin lay, so still,
Piteous whinings of the collies
Hearts of all, aboard, did thrill;

But, at last, the corse was carried
To the deck, where, once, had run
Merry Mary and her playmates
From the dawn till set of sun;

While the service, so pathetic, By the chaplain, there, was read, Ben and Daisy strained their leashes, Bound to reach beloved dead:

Then, as gentle, little Mary
To the rail was lifted, high,
(By the hands of tearful sailors,)
There, beneath the solemn sky,

Daisy broke the band, which held her, O'er the gunwale gave a leap Just as Mary's tiny body Vanished 'neath the foaming deep: All alone, beside her mistress, Now, in peace, doth Daisy rest, Sung to sleep by ocean dirges, Pillowed close on Mary's breast!

SPORTSMAN, SPARE THE LITTLE BIRDS!

When the beautiful October
Turns the leaves to gold and brown,
When the maples, (blushing crimson,)
Fling their leaflets up and down,
When the huntsman, (with his rifle,)
Wanders thro' the forest fair,
Oh, I pray you, heed my words,—
Sportsman, spare the little birds!

If you must, oh, cruel fowler,
Shoot the hermit screech-owls gray!
And the crow, that's so destructive,
You may kill, most any day!
But, when tramping thro' the thicket,
With your gun already cocked,
Oh, I pray you, heed my words,—
Sportsman, spare the singing birds!

For, the singing birds, remember,
Are all far too small for food;
But, are nature's finest preachers
To us human beings rude;
So, whene'er you meet the redstart,
Bobolink or meadow lark,
Oh, I pray you, heed my words,—
Sportsman, spare the singing birds!

Do not tempt the giddy woman
With birds' plumage to adorn
Her form fair enough, already,
Without feathers rudely torn
From the humming-bird, bright burnished,
Or the egret's queenly crest;
So, I pray you, heed my words,—
Sportsman, spare the pretty birds!

And, know, too, the sweetest singers,
Which bewitch the listening ear,
Are not idle, thriftless fellows
Wasting time all thro' the year,
But, are scavengers of insects
That destroy our forest trees;
So, I pray you, heed my words,—
Sportsman, spare the busy birds!

May your bag be filled with game birds,

With the partridge, plump and sweet!
May you give a lordly banquet,
Where, together, there may meet
Noble men and lovely ladies
Who will laud you to the skies,
When you tell them, in low words,
Why you spared the singing birds!

A PETITION

Oh, gracious Heavenly Father, Before thy Throne I bow, And on thy holy Altar I offer up my vow!

I thank thee for the sunshine
That greets my waking eyes!
I thank thee for the blossoms!—
For yonder starry skies!

For food, for shelter, raiment! But, most of all, for health! I thank thee for contentment Which better is than wealth!

Lord, now, I pray for pardon For ev'ry trespass dark, And help to live, henceforward, More near the Shining Mark!

To get my daily comfort
By walking in that way
Which points to Life Eternal!
Which leads to Endless Day!

TO MY PAPER KNIFE

O knife in fearful dagger's form, Thou mak'st my very blood grow warm! Whene'er I take thee in my hand, My thoughts fly towards a distant land, Where, in a small, Swiss cottage neat, Which lieth safe at Mont Blanc's feet, An unknown, peasant lad from pine, Once, fashioned thee, oh, poinard mine! Once, fashioned thee with skill and pride, Not dreaming, that, o'er ocean wide, His knife, with gentians rudely wrought, To me would by a friend be brought, And, that upon my desk 'twould lie, A mentor mute, forever, nigh, To speak sweet thoughts, (which, ne'er, will end,) To me of maker and of friend,-That friend who, now, hath roamed afar Across the River, o'er the Bar;-Who'll, ne'er, return or token bring!

But, just at dusk, when vespers ring, I hear these words, "Oh, haste, friend dear, Haste onward to the Mountains clear!—The Mountains, like the Alps so blue, But, fairer, grander to the view, That flash and gleam with rosy light! For, here, God's smile makes day of night!"

GRANDMOTHER'S CLOCK

In its dark, wooden case, near the stairway, Stands my Grandmother's time-keeper old, With its face blotched and wrinkled and yellow, But, erect as an Indian bold, As it measures the hours,

While it bravely uptowers 'Neath the cap which its face doth enfold:

Fifty years, the old clock marked the moments
For my Grandmother good with great care;
Seventeen times, its clear tongue birth-hour noted
Of her beautiful babies, so fair,
In a cradle she rocked
As clock's heart-beats loud knocked
'Gainst its hard, bony bosom so bare:

Many hundreds of times, its voice warning
Must have Grandma aroused, at the loom,
When 'twas time to prepare noontide banquet
In that cheery, low-ceiled, sunny room,
Where bright eyes and cheeks red
Gave sweet flavor to bread,
From all hearts chasing sorrow and gloom:

Ah! how oft did its tones break the stillness,
As she sat in her rush-bottomed chair,
(With a candle illuming the darkness
Of the midnight's weird, still, solemn air,)
Making coats for each boy
Out of cloth, that, in joy,
She had spun from the sheep's fleece, so fair!

Old clock's notes seemed how merry and joyful
On the night eldest daughter, a bride,
Left the roof of her parents, forever,
In a snug, little cot to abide!
How on wings flew the time,
To the clock's cheerful chime,
Till to silence the revelry died!

Yet, how loud, harsh and hoarse seemed its accents,
On the night young Rebecca, so sweet,
Left the earth, on the eve of her bridal,
When she went her dear Saviour to meet!
How the pulse of clock's chest
Seemed a thrust in the breast
Of each friend in his hard, high-backed seat!

As I look at the ancient, old timepiece,
As I list to its voice, gladsome, bright,
Thoughts recur to those eyes, once, so sparkling,
To those fingers, with touch soft and light,
Which have gazed at its face,
As it stood in its place,
And caressed heart-strings strong, ev'ry night;

And, it seems, when alone in the gloaming,
And, "Tick! Tock!" echoes plaintively clear,
That my Grandma, there, sits at her knitting,
With form bent and face wrinkled and sere;
For, the clock was her friend
And its love, ne'er, did end;
But, tonight, in the silence I hear,

"Fare thee well, my good friend, true and faithful, Fare thee well! I am, too, near the goal Where the weary find rest and all burdens From tired shoulders and bosoms off-roll, Where we'll meet, once again, Ne'er, to part, Dear, I ken, But, to speak, as of yore, soul to soul!"

AUTUMN

Clustered berries are drooping down From the graceful rowan-tree; Shining nuts from the chestnut's crown Come a-showering down to me:

'Neath the maples, by hedge-rowed lane, (Since the frost declared for war,) Stand the sumachs, in Mars's train, Flaunting flags as red as gore:

Clumps of asters, with cordate leaves, Kneel to make their toilet where The bright brook with its sword upheaves The brown sward of meadows bare:

Silky hair of the tasselled corn From pure gold is turning brown, But, it, still, joyful waves, at morn, In the fields beyond the town:

Purpling grapes Bacchus hangs on high Fingers sly of thieves to shun, While o'er all is the cloudless sky Where's enthroned the shining sun:

Squirrels gray, now, employ the day Laying up of nuts a store, And the bobolink's on his way To a warmer, southern shore:

When the hills are as clearly cut
As a cameo of cost,
Would my home were a shepherd's hut
Where the slope by a brook is crossed!

Where I'd hear, at the close of day, Cheerful calls of chickadees, And the night-wind for me would play On the spruces' thousand keys!

Such a shed would be more to me, On the hills in autumn fair, Than a palace of art could be In a spot of forests bare!

A soft bed of the balsam sweet,
Water cool from some clear spring,
Piney airs, that the nostrils greet,
Years of health and strength would bring!

And I'd love Mother Nature more, When I city sports forsook For the cataract's ceaseless roar And the call of crow and rook!

I far wiser should surely be, Happier, too, oh, yes, indeed, Dear Dame Nature, I swear to thee, When thy book I'd learned to read!

And, each fall, when your harvest horn You poured freely out to me, I'd be thankful I, here, was born, And give heartfelt praise to thee!

THE FORAGE CUP

Oh, ancient mug of earthenware, As down from étagère you stare, Your story I'll relate,— The thrilling tale of times gone by, When thou, beneath the southern sky, Met, all unmoved, thy fate!

With other mugs, in looks like thine, On pantry-shelf you stood in line, Where cotton fields glowed white, And saw the rice-swamps, down below, And heard the planter's stinging blow On blacks' scarred shoulders light!

But, lo! one night, you heard the cry,

"The Yankee Army's coming by!"
And, then, in hurry hot,
The master harnessed, one by one,
His sterling steeds, black, roan and dun,
And, off, at ten-mile trot,

He rode and left you, there, alone,
To reach some spot, to you unknown,
Where safe he might abide;
But, short the space you had to wait;
The foe reviled was at the gate;
Ah! where should, now, you hide?

No coward, thou, oh, mug of white With circling stripes of azure bright Set off by bands of jet! Upon the shelf, with careless air, You stood in silence till a pair Of eyes, still blacker yet

Than are thy bands, you saw glance up To where you towered, oh, shining cup, And, then, with chuckle gay, From off thy pedestal of old Their owner drew thee, beaker bold, And laid thee snug away

Within his leathern knapsack worn,
Rain-beaten, muddy, rough and torn;
When, in its depths, you found
A white, wool shawl, with border bright,
And peacock feathers, seized, that night,
Whilst boys, on forage bound,

Stripped old plantation-house of all It held of worth, both large and small; And, then, at call, "To arms!" Turned backs on homestead, nevermore, To cross its foot-worn threshold o'er, Or rest beneath its palms:

And, thus, at handsome soldier's back, Oh, forage cup, in creased knapsack You journeyed, day by day; You heard the rebels' battle-cry,—The cannon's boom along the sky,—The wounded's mournful lay:

When carnage din was hushed, and night Put end, at length, to bloody fight,— When camp-fires brightly gleamed, From out the knapsack old was drawn Thy comely form by hands forlorn; And, instantly, it seemed A fragrant flood of coffee rare Rose, steaming, thro' night's chilly air; Forgot were blistered feet; Forgot the pain that head did rack; Forgot the tired, weary back; When mouth mustached did meet

Thy curving rim, oh, forage cup,
Thy cheering contents hot to sup!
No cup on earth could be,
(Tho' wrought of gold or silver bright,
With bonny jewels rare bedight,)
One-half so dear as thee!

When drained was draught that buoyed him up, Thine owner praised thee, modest cup! Thy belts he called as blue As were the eyes of wife, so dear, In far-off North, and, then, a tear In dark eye gleamed like dew:

On march, in camp or battle-line, His comrade wert thou, beaker mine, Till soldier took his bed; E'en, in the hospital, you lay, In knapsack soiled, on pallet gray, Beneath his fevered head:

When convalescent, drank he, first, From out thy breast to quench his thirst; And, when up North came he, With shawl and peacock-feathers blue, (Kept safe for wifie, sweet and true,) With heart brimful of glee,

He fetched thee, forage cup, to dwell, Fore'er, in the land he loved so well; Once more, on a shelf to stand, Reminding him of days, long past, When he was of that Army vast Which saved this lovely land:

But, now, in camp upon the hill
My soldier father lieth still;—
The welkin blue, his tent;—
His blanket soft, the snow so white;—
His camp-fire bright, the clear starlight;
And moonbeams, thro' each rent

Of thin cloud-curtains, fall in love Upon the flag which floats above His patient face, so dear; And, there, he'll sleep until, at last, The Reveille's shrill, trumpet blast, Some morn, he'll, joyful, hear: So, forage cup, you, now, know well Why, here, with me, you, e'er, must dwell; For, on thy banded face
My Sire's dark eyes, I'll see no more,
In love, have rested, o'er and o'er;
And, on thy rim I trace

Where bearded lip, so many a time, Hath snatched a kiss, at hour of prime, Ere should'ring heavy gun And marching on thro' mud and mire, Or, waiting for the word to fire, Where battle lowered dun:

And, so, I'll keep thee, beaker old, Till I lie, too, within the mould, To whisper, sweet and low, The tale I, ne'er, shall quite forget Of the deeds of one, with eyes of jet, Who marched to meet the foe!

CORNELIA'S JEWELS

Th' Eternal City, still, doth hide Among her hillsides seven; Reflected in her Tiber's tide, Still, shine the stars of heaven:

Her forum, temples, arches fair, (The signs of glorious days,) Still, stand in grand, old ruins, there, — The theme of poets' lays:

And, there, Cornelia, good and great, Brought up her children three All sloth and wickedness to hate,— To pure and noble be:

Methinks I see her villa where She ruled in gentle love,— The courtyard rife with roses rare She, daily, bent above:

I see her, on a certain day, When, chatting with a guest, Upon a splendid couch she lay, In simple stola dressed:

I hear the fountain's murmur sweet; Its cooling air I feel, As, after hours of wilting heat, Thro' dwelling it doth steal:

I note the guest her hostess show The ornaments she wears; I list the conversation flow Thro' blossom-scented airs:

And, then, I hear the lady say,
"Come, now, Cornelia, Friend,
Oh, show to me the jewels gay
Such grace thy looks must lend!"

Cornelia wisely held her friend In talk a little while; And, at the conversation's end, There flew thro' peristyle,

From school, Cornelia's children three; When she, in glee, exclaimed, "My Friend, you, here, my gems can see,— My peerless jewels famed!"

Ah, sad it seems, Cornelia sweet, That both thy sons, so dear, Away from thee, their death should meet, In revolution drear!

And, yet, your loss with strength you bore; Your grief you deep did hide; The jewels, which you proudly wore, You meekly laid aside!

No wonder that the people reared A monument to thee! A woman, so to all endeared, Rome, ne'er again, did see!

Know, readers, how th' inscription read? "Gornelia," (not the wife, But,) "Mother of the Gracchi!" dead, Cut down in civil strife:

Ye mothers of the present day, Like this good dame of Rome, Beside your hearthstones closer stay To grace and bless your home!

I can not promise ye that, e'er, Ye'll honored be as she, But children's love ye'll, surely, bear;— Life's sweetest joy to thee!

MISS LULL

Miss Lull is a name would I not care To give to a pet of mine; But, yet, it was given my Grandma's mare, A creature both fair and fine:

This mare was a sorrel, stout and strong, Who, nearly, a ton did weigh; And fleet were the feet that flew along When felt she at heart most gay:

She harrowed, she raked, she pulled the plough; In hot, summer days, she hayed; And damp grew the star upon her brow, But, never, was she dismayed:

Now, early, one spring, a colt was born To dear, old Miss Lull, so true; And happy was she from night to morn When lay it within her view:

But, nervous was she,—that mother mare, If harnessed they her to go Away from the one to her how fair, Asleep in the straw below!

One day, at the station, far away, Two friends were expected; so, They gave good Miss Lull her grain and hay And tackled her up to go:

Eight miles, there and back, too long a way Was judged for the foal to run; And, so, 'twas decided he must stay At home till the task was done:

Instead of her common, easy gait,
Which needed nor word nor whip,
The old mother-mare seemed just to hate
To go on this tedious trip:

Good Grandma must urge her flagging feet With touch of the lash, that day, As passed they the fields where ripening wheat Hung heavy and drooping lay:

But, after the greetings, when each guest Sat safe on the wagon seat, And Grandma had turned Miss Lull's broad breast Towards home, in the noontime heat,

At once, at a fearful rate of speed,
Strode on the great mare, and foam
Flew out from her lips on the wayside weed,
As galloped she on toward home:

She whinnied and neighed, as on she flew; She sweat till each hair grew dark; And Grandma, (her friend, forever, true,) She'd, ne'er, for a second, hark:

At last, in her stall she stood, once more, Wet through, and with beating breast, But, happy, for, there, her face before, Her colt, safe and sound, did rest.

A TEMPERANCE SONG

Not far from home, a country lane Invites me, ev'ry day, To free my heart from care and pain Along its wooded way,

Where summer zephyrs softly sigh Among its priestly pines; Where butterflies flit fleetly by Amongst its graceful vines;

Where piquant columbines, above A steeply-shelving bank, Look down upon their modest love, (Of high and royal rank,)

In plain, but, richest purple dressed, With coronal of dew On head hung low upon her breast,— The violet, so true;

Where autumn asters, blue and white, Bow low before the blast; Where sunset's clear and mellow light To gold turns oaken mast:

Today, as usual, I went
Along the winding way;
Gray, leaden clouds a deep awe lent
To all that spring makes gay:

O'er leaves on which, last glowing fall, The nimble rabbit leaped, There, now, was drawn a shining pall With dazzling jewels heaped;

My cane I clinched as in a vise; I listened to my tread Upon the crusted snow and ice Which crowned the roadway bed:

My collie gamboled, to and fro, To keep his body warm; He delved deep down beneath the snow Which clung to his lithe form

In pearls and diamonds as fine As deck a kingly crown; We were,—myself and collie mine, The richest pair in town:

These gems were ours;—the landscape;—air;
(The purest ever breathed;)
My heart had all but lost its care,
As round my head it wreathed:

The pines, upon the copse-clad hill, A requiem sang full sweet; But, what was this my blood made chill, Just there, beyond my feet?

A silent form,—a man I saw Amid the gleaming snow, Asleep or hurt, in death's fierce jaw, I did, at first, not know:

I hurried to the stranger's side;
"Oh! are you sick?" I said;
When "No!" he, stupidly, replied
Whom I had feared were dead:

I went for help, and strong men three Assisted him to rise; He wasn't injured; ah! not he! That stranger, so unwise!

But, lying, there, amid the snow, He quickly, would have died If I had happened not to go Along that pathway wide;

For, he, alas! poor, foolish soul!
Upon the wine-cup red
Had looked so long that o'er him stole
The sleep that claims the dead:

Oh, might this be a lesson long
To all who love their wine!
Oh, might they think of this short song!—
Drink water when they dine!

A MODERN MINERVA

(Dedicated to my neighbor, Mrs. Jones)

I know a lovely lady,
With locks of silver gray,
Who, often, waves me grave salutes,
While passing on my way:

Her eyes are large and tender; Her smile is full as sweet As that of many a maiden fair Whom, ev'ry day, we meet; Her brow is deeply furrowed
By the plough of Father Time;
But, on her cheek youth's roses bloom,
Tho' blighted some by rime;

Her back is bent by burdens She's carried four score years; And bowed is head, as if in prayer, As Heavenly Goal she nears;

Once, straight as any pine tree, And nimble as the fawn, 'Mid Mountains Green of old Vermont She tripped, each dewy morn;

Or, fair as her famed namesake, (The wise Minerva tall,) She went about her household tasks, Beloved by each and all:

Unlike the ancient goddess,
She bears on breast no shield
To turn beholders into stone,
Upon the battlefield;

For, on her gentle bosom Is borne the badge of peace, To lead her faithful followers on Where earthly conquests cease;

Her step is slow, yet, steady; And, still, she walks abroad; Each week, she weeds her garden-plot Which, ne'er, hath she ignored;

Her mind is clear and cloudless
As, when at altar's side,
She placed her hand on lover's arm
To forth be led,—a bride;

She's rather hard of hearing,
But, those deep eyes of blue
Watch ev'ry curve of speakers' lips
To catch their accents true;

Her heart is kind and steadfast; Her soul is pure and white; Each act is ever undefiled And free from soil or blight:

And, as she nears the time mark
Of four score years and ten,
I wish each passing day more blessed
By Him who loves all men!

Then, when Death's Bark approaches

With slow and muffled oar, She'll hail, with joy, the Boatman grave To bear her to that Shore

Where spirit speaks to spirit; Where all is peace untold; And where for seeds she's sown in love She'll reap a thousand fold!

THE PEACE OFFERING

Still stands the schoolhouse in the town, Tall maples it adorning, The weather-vane, on belfry-crown, Aglow in early morning:

Long, long ago, a summer sun Streamed over it in splendor, And touched its blackboards, dark and dun, With kisses warm and tender:

Its heavy doors, deep scarred and scratched By kicks of urchins vicious, By a teacher's hand were, now, unlatched, And in swept airs delicious:

Besides the breeze, there entered, there, Where woman went to writing, A boy whose face of beauty rare Clear, hazel eyes were lighting:

The sunshine shone on curling hair And eyes, brimful of grieving, As edged he towards his teacher's chair, Deep sobs his bosom heaving:

At length, he moved her side more near, Then, threw his arms, so rounded, About her neck, and, in her ear This sweet confession sounded:

"I'm sorry I was bad in school
And caused you so much sorrow;
But, I'll obey your strictest rule,
Today, and each tomorrow!"

And, then, upon her desk he laid,
(With rosy cheek a-dimple,)
A basket from a peach-stone made,—
His sweet, peace off'ring simple:

That boy hath, since, a soldier been, For native country fighting; Imagine him in battle din, His hazel eye uplighting! The woman, now, is old and gray; Her school days, too, are ended, And, here, she pens this little lay Of him who footsteps wended

To school, that morn, to tell his sin, (Some childish mischief, merely,) Bestow his gift, and pardon win From her who loved him dearly:

Her prayer, today, is simply this,
"Be thou as single hearted
As when to me you gave that kiss,
On yon bright day departed!"

INDIAN BASKETS

Beautiful baskets, all woven by hand, Made by the Indians, so tawny and tanned, Baskets, all sizes and shapes, and the hue, E'en, of the grass or the heavens, so blue; Buy, lady, buy just one basket of me! Surely, 'twill bring you its contents of glee! Here, they are bright as your beauteous eye,—Fresh as the cheek that with roses doth vie!

Handkerchief baskets you see, here, so square;—Baskets for pins which you thrust thro' your hair;—Baskets for stockings, and others for gloves;—Work-baskets fine which each housewife so loves: These to the pleasant inn parlor I bring! Buy, ladies, buy whilst my song you I sing! Buy you a basket with sweet-grass entwined; Purer than perfume I know it you'll find!

Far to the north, on the Canada line,
Where loom the cedar, the hemlock and pine,
Where fragrant balsams rise, tier upon tier,
Up to the tops of the great mountains drear,
Grow, tall and straight, like young wood-sprites, so
white,

Thousands of birches,—the Indians' delight; Now, 'tis the bark of these birches, so fair, That, for these baskets, with skill, we prepare!

Peeling the bark from the birch is a task Indians of women and girls, never, ask; But, when the bark in strips neatly is cut, Dyed of all hues of the rainbow, old hut Swarms with our squaws, ever solemn and staid, Swarms with small children and each dusky maid, Braiding and plaiting these baskets for you, Pale Faces fair, with your eyes of deep blue!

Buy, ladies, buy of a poor Indian boy Just one bright basket! 'twill fill him with joy! And, when you look at your basket, you'll dream, Dream of the camp, on a far, northern stream, Filled with the lithe, bronzéd-cheeked maidens,

Wrapped in rough coats and their own raven hair, Children of those who were, once, rich and free, But, who, today, are poor toilers like me!

AN EVENING RIDE

We rode along, my Love and I, Beneath the April evening sky; Behind, we left the dusty town, Which made its mark on coat and gown, And passed within the silent wood Where oaks, like arméd sentries, stood:

The boughs, with buds almost in leaf, Stood out in bold, distinct relief Against the red of yonder skies Which slowly paled to fainter dyes; And, soon, the evening star we traced Among the branches interlaced:

Along the road, 'mong fern and brake, We knew the violet, soon, would wake; And, peeping thro' rough branchlets bare, The windflower was, already, there; But, now, the sky, once brilliant red, Frowned, cold and gray, just overhead:

Deep darkness fell on all around; Thick vapors rose from out the ground; The smell of earth, upturned by plough, From fields afar, we scented, now; Our cheerful chat to silence died, As on we rode thro' woodlands wide:

Our horses' feet the only sound,—
(A hollow thud upon the ground!)
The one we drove knew well the way;
The one I led, (a prancing bay,)
Pulled hard the halter which I held;
'Gainst going farther he rebelled:

And, now, I could not see a trace Of any steed, or, e'en, the face Of him I nestled close beside, So grew the gloom of wildwoods wide; A nameless fear put out joy's light, As gripped I rope with all my might:

But suddenly, the gloom grew gray; I dimly spied, upon our way, An opening 'mong the forest trees. And felt on face the freshening breeze; Rough pasture lands I, then, descried, Hemmed in by hills on either side:

All this I saw in the gloaming's light That comes before the quiet night; On face of him, I knew so well, The strange, weird light of twilight fell; The horse, behind, his head tossed high, As tho' my power would he defy;

Then, quick as thought, I felt a jerk; The line was snapped, and, in the murk Of that spring night, I heard the steed As off he sprang, at utmost speed; We sought to pierce the mist of gray Thro' which, now, roamed the runaway:

Erelong, he climbed the sloping right, And, there, in profile, 'gainst the light, Where stars were smiling in the blue, We plainly saw our stallion new; Of giant height he seemed, tho' fair, A wingéd Pegasus most rare:

Long years have flown since that spring night, When woodland shades obscured the light, Preventing me from catching trace Of curling locks and speaking face Of him who's passed from gloom to light, And, on the Holy City's height

He walks, clear outlined 'gainst the sky, Where I shall see him, by and by, When thoughts like features, shall be seen, So strong shall be our sight and keen; And, then, like Pegasus, (who bore Aurora on his back,) he'll soar

Along those towering, heavenly hills, And, never, feel the slightest ills; He'll quaff the springs, from rocks which burst, And, ne'er again, know burning thirst; Then, wait, my soul, till dawns the day When, there, like him, thou'lt speed away!

AT THE CROSS

Three crosses, reared upon a hill,
Three living figures bore;
And where sharp spikes were driven, still,
Dripped drops of crimson gore:

Upon the central cross there hung A man who, ne'er, did sin; Who spent his life the Jews among To teach them Heaven to win:

Around him rang taunt, scoff and jeer From mocking mouths, so vile; And, e'en, the thieves, beside, did leer At Him who knew no guile:

Amid the tumult dire and din His gentle voice they hear Forgiveness asking for the sin Of Jew and Gentile, near:

But, still, the Crucified they mocked,— Rough soldier, scribe and priest; Crowds past the Cross, reviling, flocked, While gibes and sneers, ne'er, ceased:

At last, the holy Martyr cried To God; His Spirit fled; When earthquakes shook the mountainside, And graves gave up their dead:

The lightning flashed; the rocks were rent; And, 'mid the darkness weird, The bustling throng was backward bent; When, round the Form Endeared

A simple group, alone, was seen,—
The Martyr's mother fair,
Forgiven Mary Magdalene
And John, th' Apostle rare:

They feared not thunder, dark or rain, For, love possessed each heart, Love deep for One, now, out of pain, Who bore so well his part:

We see them, as, below the Cross, They kneel in rev'rent grace, While teardrops tell the tale of loss On each, low-bowed, sweet face:

Ah! how can we, at this late day,
Forget to homage sing
To Him who walked that weary way
That Life He us might bring?

FACES IN THE FIRE

One winter night, in feudal times, Ere curfew bells had rung their chimes, Three people, musing, sate Before a fire, upon a hearth, Which blazed and crackled loud in wrath, Exulting in its hate:

The first, a woman, bent and gray, Long past the time for work or play, Who lived but in the past; The second was a youngster fair, With merry heart and smile most rare, Whose looks were blaze-ward cast:

The third was, yet, in manhood's prime,
Whose feet were stayed, like birds' by lime,
From mingling with the brave
In other lands, where pike and sword
Were pushing back the heathen horde
From their Redeemer's grave:

And, as these watched the flashing fire,
That rose and sank, then, leaped up higher,
One saw a charger white
Which bore a knight, armed cap-a-pie,
Before whose thrust the foe did flee,
Such zeal was his, and might:

The scene that pretty Cedric saw,
As loud he heard the fagots roar,
Was Santa Claus, most queer,
With toys and candy stacked so high
His pack seemed, e'en, to touch the sky,
As towards him he did peer:

The picture, there, that grandam cheered, Tho' dim her eyes, and weak and bleared, Was that of one, long dead,—
The husband of her youthful days,
Who seemed to gaze from out the blaze
As on the night they wed:

And, so it is in modern life,
(No matter if of peace or strife,)
We see what's in our mind,
Whene'er we sit in inglenook,
And, in the blaze, as in a book,
We seek to, often, find!

THE GYPSY BEGGAR'S SONG

A Gypsy Queen am I, by birth, The fairest, once they said, of earth, With bosom brimming o'er with mirth; My tresses, (like the raven's jet, Confined by neither pin or net,) My splendid, golden girdle met; Eyes, dark as night, lit up a face Where ne'er a trouble left a trace, Tho' I were Leader of our race!

My home was 'mong the mountains high;
My mossy bed, the torrent nigh,
O 'ercurtained by the sapphire sky;
Above my couch, the comets bright,
Like tapers tall, illumed the night
Till Dawn's fair fingers quenched their light;
And, then, I to the streamlet hied,
And, by the babbling brooklet's side,
I combed my locks,—the gypsies' pride:

Then, after tasting spotted trout, (So lately caught in wiers about,) They saddled me a pony stout, And, with my band of gypsies gay, I cantered off upon my bay, O'er cliff and crag, away! away! But, now, alas! my child is dead! With wane of beauty followers fled, And I, a Queen, must beg my bread!

With eyes turned dim and hair grown gray, (No spot whereon my head to lay,
Tho' blasts blow bleak and dark the day,)
I pray, dear Dame, from out thy gold
A little spare for gypsy old,
And she thy fortune will unfold!
Her eyes, tho' bleared, can read thy heart!
She knows what makes those teardrops start!
She feels the pains that thro' thee dart!

Remember this, my gentle Dove, That beauty holds a husband's love As sure as there's a heaven above! So, dry thine eyes and bathe thy face, And, in thy lovely gown of lace, Thy sweetest smile wear thou, a space, When thou shalt see the gypsy old Hath given advice worth thrice thy gold, And thou hast much, I have been told:

Then, Lady fair, tonight, I'll pray That He, who made the gladsome day, May clear all briers from thy way And, as you wake, at rosy morn, You'll think of one,—a princess born, But, now, a beggar, all forlorn, Who, once, like thee, was young and fair; On whose bright brow sat, ne'er, a care, For, Love was hers beyond compare!

Yes, love of husband and of child, Of followers, tho' uncouth and wild, Who, ever, on her beauty smiled;
But, when, alack,! her baby died,
Her husband left the Leader's side,
For, smile she couldn't, tho' she tried;
Her beauty faded; grew she old;
No more, her round ranged gypsies bold,
Till, now, she's neither home nor gold!

Then, this let be a warning deep! O'er nothing, Lady, long time, weep! Let all thy cares and worries sleep! A smile makes far more fair the face Than velvet, jewels rare, or lace; And nought can beauty lost replace! Remember all mankind hates tears, And, she, who smiling e'er appears, Herself to all the world endears!

AN INCIDENT OF THE CIVIL WAR

The army lay in camp
On ground with dewdrops damp,
Each soldier wond'ring where the mail could be;
But, he, with news-bag strong,
Drove on a mule along,
His eye sharp scanning ev'ry bush and tree:

And, now, his lonely way
Thro' gloomy forests lay,—
A stretch of fragrant, yellow pines, so deep
The moon or starry light,
From dusk throughout the night,
Could not thro' sombre leafage even peep:

The mule he could not guide
'Long road he now must ride,
So, gave the beast loose rein and trusted well,
By instinct rare, he'd find
The path thro' woods, pine-lined,
Which led to where the friendly starlight fell:

The rider heard no sound

Save thuds, on leaf-strewn ground,
Of steed's strong, clumsy, (yet, sure-treading,)
feet;
The world seemed sound asleep;
The silence was so deep
He thought he heard his heart within him beat:

And, then, he held his breath;
'Mid stillness as of death,
Thro' nodding needles soughed the balmy breeze;
He thought it, first, a sigh;
Did rebel scouts, there, lie
In ambush 'mong the sentinel-like trees?

Then, "Halt!" rang loud and clear, From out the darkness drear, Quick changing ruddy cheek to ashen gray; Spurs pricked the brute's soft side, And, fast, thro' woodlands wide

Fled mule and man along the narrow way:

Each second, driver thought Aground should he be brought By grayback picket's whizzing, rifle ball; His raven locks uprose; His youthful blood quite froze,

And o'er his flesh there oozed a clammy pall:

At length, from woods he merged; Blood-stained the beast he'd urged, And weak and wet his form, so stanch, at morn, When, once again, he heard That voice; upon his word, An owl's it was, as sure as he was born!

But, soon, 'mong boys in blue, 'Neath stars and falling dew, Around the bivouac fire, which flickered bright, The man his terror told, And loud were laughs that rolled Aloft, awakening echoes of the night:

The cruel war is done; The courier's race is run, And blesséd peace o'erbroods our country dear; In southern pines, today, Is heard the owlet gray, But, those who list have, now, of him no fear:

May screech-owls in the pines, Where soft the night-wind whines, Ne'er, know the knell of warfare's awful might; But, crouched in lofty nests, Up-ruffle fluffy breasts, And hoot, "Hoo! hoo!" throughout the happy night!

MASSAPOAG

The birds were singing; the breezes flinging Dewdrops from pine-tree crown, When Bob, eyes gleaming, and I, a-dreaming, Set out beyond the town:

We met no mortal at gate or portal; The world seemed sound asleep; The redwings calling, our footsteps falling Spoiled not the silence deep:

The air was fragrant with odors vagrant From clovers, crimson red; The bracken glittered; sly squirrels tittered In branches overhead:

Abodes grew fewer, and I, wood-wooer, Was filled with deep delight; The sun was peeping thro' shades a-creeping Before Aurora bright:

At last, surrounded by pines, that bounded Her form like guardsmen grim, The Lake, so lowly, at matins holy, We spied 'mid shadows dim:

The guards, attending, their brows seemed bend-

To list the prayer she said, Ere eyeballs, beaming 'neath crown a-gleaming, She raised above her head

To where stood, smiling, the Sun, beguiling
His time on her to shine, When she grew beaming, who, once, lay dreaming 'Neath gloomy fir and pine:

In bosom dripping were, ever, dipping The swift sandpipers brown, Their wings a-waving and bills a-laving Against her glitt'ring gown:

A flower of gladness plucked I, in sadness, A-turning, then, away; The Lake a-leaving whose breast was heaving Beneath the Sun God's ray:

In ancient ages, when woodland sages Were Indian Sachems fine, Why was't, O Water, a Warrior's Daughter Received a name like thine?

This name,-dost love it? Or, do thou covet Another, Massapoag? I'd know the meaning which to thy weening Is sweet, thou smiling rogue!

For your replying the echoes dying Of flapping pinions fleet Float o'er the water, dear Indian Daughter, My listening ear to greet!

YE STARRY HOSTS OF HEAVEN

Ye starry hosts of heaven, above,
Thy countless ranks I see,
(Throughout the silent night I love,)
To, ever, westward flee
Thy Captain's orders to obey,
Whose call is, "Trim your lamps! Away!"

On summer eves, I look for you
Upon the welkin way,
(When fades the day and falls the dew,)
And note how faint each ray
You shed upon the sultry air
From out those lamps you keep with care!

But, when on winter nights, so cold,
I gaze upon the sky
To see how brave you are and bold,
Upon your march on high,
I joy to see how clear the light
You cast t'illume the darksome night!

How glad the sailor on the sea,
The sheik upon the sands,
When, in the gale or whirlwind, he
Doth spy thy beauteous bands
Whose legion lights along the sky
Him show where lurking dangers lie!

And, e'en, when beating rain or snow Obscures thy loving light, Each torch is burning bright, I know, On yonder far-off height, And, could mine eyes but pierce the veil, They'd see that, ne'er, thy light doth fail!

So, like the shining, heavenly host, Am I resolved to go,— To do some little good, my boast, While marching, "Heavenward, Ho!" To flash my light along the way Which leads to Life and Endless Day!

My torch is small; my light is dim; I can not throw it far; But, I my little lamp can trim, And, (like the smallest star In you, great galaxy of light,) Can shine my best while lasts the night! And, maybe, if I shine my best, Some sinful soul may see,— Some thought of God within his breast Be born at sight of me, And I may lead one heart to Him Who lit my lamp, altho' so dim!

FEBRUARY

Month of frost and snow-storms biting, Shortest month, tho' seeming long, Month, when gleeds all hearths are brightening, Take from me this simple song!

Runnels, now, are sheathed in armor; Holt and hill with snow are white; Busy is each careful farmer Housing herds, at fall of night:

Cocks' shrill calls are few and muffled; Short, but sharp, the caw of crow; Jays' fair feathers blue are ruffled, As they roost on cedars low:

Yet, there come rare days of mildness, Mingled close with terms of cold, Cheating man, who, in his wildness, Thinks that gone is Winter bold;

And he listens for the litorn, When the sun in gold hath set, Or the bellow of the bittern In the thawing marshes wet:

But, without a second's warning, South wind's shifted sheer to west, And, before the rosy dawning, Ev'rything in frost is dressed:

Dead and dreary look the marches, Where no meadowlark, now, rests; Lovely, tho', the drooping larches With the hoar-frost on their breasts!

But, we know the season's coming, Know the day is almost here When we'll hear the bees a-humming O'er the moors, now, brown and sere!

So, dear Heart, tho' cold and cheerless Look the dales and dells, today, Soon, shall come a moment peerless, When we'll list the bluebird's lay!

Gone will be all snowy weather!
O'er will be the piercing blast!

Then, we'll live in joy, together, All forgetful of the past!

CLOVER HEADS

(Dedicated to my departed Friend, Mrs. Pierce)

Clover heads, clover heads, crimson as blood, Bathing the fields in thy radiant flood,

Seeing thy blossoms, so lovely and fair, Smelling thy perfume, which fills the soft air,

Carries me back on the old, foot-worn track, When, gay in heart, thought I nought did I lack;

Back to a rare, sunny summer, in June, When sang the flowers of the fells in sweet tune,

When, with a friend, over pasture and hill, Seeking thy charming, red blooms, bowls to fill,

Often, we roamed, and, each time, the decree Was that no flower could compare, Dears, with thee!

Now, my old Friend, on the Far, Shining Shore, Much brighter blossoms can cull, evermore;

But, when she waits by the River for me, Clasped in her hand, clover heads I shall see;

Clover heads, clover heads, beauteous and bright, Cover my head, when grows darksome the light!

Ne'er shall I beg for a bit better shroud, When lieth low this meek heart, once, so proud!

No richer mantle shall I, ever, crave, When, at the end, lie I cold in the grave!

Then, when thy leaves flutter fast in the breeze, When kiss thy lips the bright, gold, honey bees,

Then, shall I know, (as they flit, buzzing, by,) Then, shall I know that rare June-time is nigh!

Cover me, then, with thy canopy red, Dewdrops a-sparkling on each heavy head,

Till I awake, nevermore, Dears, to part, Never again, from my June-time Sweetheart!

TO THE GREENWOOD COME!

Oh, come to yonder forest green! Yea, come, dear Love, with me, And be my dark-tressed gypsy queen, Our tent, the cypress tree!

Our pillows, tufted mosses green; Our couch, the graceful grass; Our candle-light, the moon's soft sheen; Say, wilt thou come, my Lass?

The birds shall be our minstrels sweet, At morning meals, Queen mine; Shy hares shall serve us luscious meat;— The brooklet bright, clear wine:

And, then, I'll dress thee, Gypsy mine, In squirrel skins, so soft, With coronal of gems that shine More bright than stars, aloft;

These gems,—the dewdrops fair, (which deck The woods, at break of day,) Without a single flaw or speck, Shall all be thine, my Fay!

And, Dear, I'll broider, ev'ry morn, Thy robe with flowerets rare; Real, living blossoms shall adorn Thy gown, unique as fair!

Then, will you come, dear Love, with me And thro' the forest fare? Will my quaint Gypsy Queen you be, In yonder greenwood rare?

If so, let's start when morning skies, (As darkly blue and clear As are my Darling's lovely eyes,) Have, once again, come here!

When sunshine turns the treetops tall To fretted pillars fair, And, ringing thro' the forest hall, Bird carols fill the air!

And, then, inhaling perfumes rare,
Thine hand in mine held fast,
Sweet Wildwood Queen, we'll onward fare
Till summer days are past!

A NIGHT WATCH

On a raw, chill evening of early spring, (Far too cold for robin or thrush to sing,)

36

A young man drew rein just before the door Of a country cottage, I see, once more, With the gloomy aspect that night it wore:

After cordial greetings, (given clear, but, low,) With the hostess I thro' the house did go Till we reached a room near the kitchen neat, When, removing wraps, I, with noiseless feet, Crossed the floor to stand by the hearthstone heat:

Then, I set me down in a rocking chair, Cushioned soft with chintz, (strewn with wildflowers fair,)

And looked up at her, by the lamp's dim light, To receive commands for a watch, that night, With a maiden gaining o'er death the fight:

The instructions were, "You're to give no drug To the lassie, there; simply, on the rug, Sit by fire, so warm, and, in patience, bide Till the morn creeps in thro' the hill-gaps wide, When you'll find me, Friend, you, again, beside!

"If the lass asks drink, or, in her weak way, Some small favor begs, do not say her nay! But, I've all arranged for the coming night; She will sleep, methinks, till the dawning light Scatters, far and wide, ev'ry elfin wight!"

Then, I threw a glance to the end of room; On a bed, resembling a cloth-draped tomb, Like a sheeted corpse, a slight figure lay, (Shaded well from lamp's small and feeble ray,) Giving heed to nought the good dame did say:

Then, the wife her charge left with me, alone;—
(A young girl I, never, had really known,)
But, whose faithful mother, with watching worn,
I had offered, now, to relieve, till morn,
In a midnight watch o'er her frail first-born:

In a few, short seconds, all household din Ceased, and, sure, I'd heard had there dropped a pin;

So, I settled me in the high-backed chair, With head backward bent, nose and chin in air, And both eyes on stained, mantel clock a-stare:

Then, except for sticks crackling in the stove, And the wind, outside, which so rough did rove, This old clock's tick-tock was the only sound Which my wand'ring thoughts to this sick-room bound,

As the hands, together, crept round and round:

Not a murmur rose from the valanced bed;

Not the slightest sigh from th' apparent dead; Only, once or twice, did a foot she move, Which small act my nerves did most deeply soothe, For, that motion she was alive did prove:

It was eight o'clock when the watch began; And, for sev'ral hours, the swift seconds ran; But, by one o'clock, I so sleepy grew That I'd given worlds had the cock but crew, Or some goblin risen before my view:

Could I but have read some exciting tale, Making pulses beat, visage turning pale! But, the lantern light was too dim for that, And I dared not stir off the hand-made mat, For, the lassie'd heard e'en a creeping cat:

I, now, counted minutes, instead of hours, With my sleepy eyes and benumbéd powers; Then, I bit my tongue and my molars clinched, And, with falt'ring fingers my muscles pinched; But, to no avail, for, I, never, flinched:

So, exhausted, both with the loss of sleep And the perfect quiet I tried to keep, Sank my heavy head on the old arm-chair, Fingers fell to lap, and, to realms of air From my heart pain faded and earthly care:

From a nap, (which seemed sev'ral hours long,) With a start, I woke, as tho' struck a gong, My eyes seeking timepiece with frightened face, When, behold! the clock, at his wonted pace, Had strode on, in truth, in his reckless race,

But a short ten minutes; ah! me! how far, In that time, I'd travelled in Dreamland's Car! But, a deal refreshed, I, now, tried to keep Tireless guard, off-warding the Sprites of Sleep, Who loud laughed at me from the shadows deep:

And the thought of loved ones, so snug in bed, Passed, in mocking mood, thro' my aching head, Till, it seemed to me, they were all heaven-blest With their drowsy heads on their pillows pressed, And with nought to trouble their nightly rest:

Yet, the clock, at length, told the stroke of five; How the cock's shrill crow did my strength revive! In the room above signs of life I heard, And, what seemed far sweeter than barnyard bird, Was the noise of wheels on the drive which stirred:

'Twas my husband coming for me, at last! (Tiresome watch o'er poor paralytic passed;)

And, when hostess entered with thanks to me, From the dead in life I was glad to flee Out to home and husband and morning, free!

Tho' the wind blew east, piercing, cold and chill, As we climbed the road up the little hill, Beamed my eyes with joy, as I noted where Mulleins tall would torches, soon, lift to air To uplight a world to me, now, thrice fair:

Since my vigil, there, in that stifled room, With its close-drawn curtains and spectral gloom, I have felt no lot is too hard to bear,— That each life, no matter how great its care, Is God blessed if lived in His cheerful air!

BEGINNING OF LABOR

The morning light is breaking O'er forest, field and fell, The birds sweet music making In dingle, dale and dell:

The sylph-like mists are creeping
Up yonder verdant hills;
Down yon steep crags are leaping
A thousand sparkling rills:

Each flower from waxen chalice Flings forth a drop of dew; Apollo, from his palace, Peeps out to paint the blue

With palest tones of amber And shell-like tints of rose To pay the early rambler For leaving his repose:

In western skies, the beauty,
Dian, grows pale and white,
But, feels it her sweet duty
To shine, with lessened light,

Till Phoebus, in his glory, Shall fire the landscape fair, And, then, grown wan and hoary, She vanishes in air:

From distant farms the crowing Of cocks is heard, no more, But, songs of reapers, mowing, And mill wheels' whir and roar:

The calm and restful feeling, That darkness brings, is done; Day's work is onward stealing; 'Tis, truly, now, begun!

MY BOOKS

I shall, ne'er, find friends more faithful, If I scour the great world wide, Than the elves which hide in covers On the book-shelves at my side:

They will chat, if I am ready,
Or be silent at a word;
They can sing the sweetest carols
Which a mortal ever heard:

When my heart is hot and heavy,
And my life seems full of care,
Merry elves across the ocean
Take with me a journey rare;—

Climb with me the Alpine summits, (Gleaming white, against the sky, Like tall priests in snowy cassocks, On God's icy altars high,)

Chanting words so sweet and soothing That my heart-ache flees away, Peace and Harmony's fair angels In my bosom holding sway:

When a howling, beating blizzard Clamors at my window-pane, With my elves I stroll thro' gardens On the slopes of sunny Spain:

On some sultry noon of August, At a tap on bookcase shelves, Of th' oppressive heat quite heedless, Now, come forth my happy elves,

And, with them, in lovely Venice, On the Grand Canal I row, (Fanned by cooling, evening breezes,) 'Neath the silver moonbeams' glow:

When I feel my Heavenly Father Doth, no longer, list my prayer, From their homes in paper covers Forth come elfin troops, most fair,

In their tender language telling
Of a God whose name is Love;—
Of His many mansions holy
In the starry skies above:

When my wicked soul is tempted

To commit some deadly sin, Then, I turn to them close hiding On my shelves from dust and din;

Soon, a psalm or touching poem Make the tears from eyelids start; Daring devil's cast behind me; Calm and quiet fill my heart:

Do you blame me when I tell you That my blithesome book-elves bright Are among my friends the dearest,— Are my life, my love, my light?

God be praised for th' art of printing!— For the men and women grand Whose best thoughts bright booklets scatter Thro' the length of ev'ry land!

BOB WHITE

Oh, come with me to the meadows low,
When sunset's blush on night's cheek doth glow;
When hot July sends the reapers brown
To mow, with zeal, the plumed grasses down,
At the hour when gently the south wind blows
The cat-tails tall, standing stiff, in rows,

Like warriors grim, with their glaives unsheathed, O'er all the swamp with the loosestrife wreathed, And, then, you'll hear, echoed loud and clear, A sound you'll wait in delight to hear,—
The Quail's sweet call, in the fading light,
Which seems repeating, "Bob White! Bob White!"

And, then, again, you, my Friends, may say,
"More wet! more wet!" pipes the songster gay;
But, this sweet bird, in mixed waistcoat dressed,
With collar black and wee, jetty crest,
Doth whistle, plainly, to me and say,
"Bob White! Bob White!" at the close of day!

UNDER THE TRYSTING TREE

Under the trysting tree, dear Love,
Wait, when the sun is low!—
Under the rustling leaves above
Thro' which the breezes blow!
Wait till I come, for, I'll surely, be there!
Wear, dear Love, too, a red rose in thine hair!

Under the trysting tree, Heart mine, Wait, when is done the day!—
Under the branches of the pine
O'er which the squirrels play!

Wait, Darling mine, for, there's nothing can keep Me from thy side but Death's last, dreamless sleep!

Under the trysting tree, my Fair,
Wait, when the sky is red,
Wearing a rosebud in the hair
Crowning thy queenly head!
Oh, how I long on thy lips mine to press
And to hear, "Thee I love!" them to confess!

Under the trysting tree, my Sweet,
Far from the village hum,
After the weary toil and heat,
Let us, this gloaming, come,
Giving our hearts and our eyes leave to speak
All the devotion for which speech is weak!

Under the trysting tree, my Sweet,
Meet me, ere falls the dew!
Happy, we'll sit upon the seat
Fitted for just us two,
Fashioned by fays on the roots of our tree,
Cushioned with moss just as green as can be!

Under the trysting tree, ma Belle,
Wait for thy lover true!
Wait, for, he's something sweet to tell,
Old, yet, forever, new,—
What ev'ry lover, from Adam of old,
Sure, to his sweetheart belovéd hath told!

Under the trysting tree, dear Love, Plight me thy troth, tonight! Plight it in presence of God above,— God and his Angels bright! Plight it, and, truly, our pine tree, in prayer, Lowly will bend o'er my Bride-to-be, fair!

Dear, to our trysting tree, some day,
We must, both, bid farewell,
When I shall bear thee far away,
Far from where, now, we dwell,—
Bear thee away as my beautiful Bride,
In whose dark hair a red rosebud shall hide!

Yet, our old trysting tree, dear Love, Never, shall we forget! Neither its bole nor boughs above, 'Neath which we, nightly, met! But, we shall wonder if sweethearts as true, Then, seek its shelter, as falleth the dew!

LEARN TO LOVE THE TREES!

Have you never paid a visit To the fairy forest wide, On some charming morn of summer, When the trees stand, side by side, Real, true monarchs of the wildwood, Some with sweetheart, some with bride?

Stalwart oaks, their mossy branches Stretching o'er the forest floor, Like cowled monks a blessing asking At some open convent door, While the breezes, softly sighing, Sing, "Amen! forevermore!"

Graceful maples, clean and shapely, In whose tops the tempests play, And, where birds, tho' rocking, rolling, Sing their sweetest roundelay, Clearly ringing thro' the forest, On some merry morn of May:

Have you chanced upon a willow, Standing close to some small stream, Leaning o'er the wimpling waters, Lost, as 'twere, in Love's sweet dream, Dropping tassled blooms upon it, Prayerfully, it, e'en, might seem?

Clustered birches you must, surely, Oft, have seen, so patient, stand, (In their gleaming, ghostly garments,) Like pure nuns, who, hand in hand, Wait, in silence deep, for orders From the Higher, Better Land:

And the pines, the tall, straight pine-trees, In whose boughs the night winds sigh, In whose spires the gentle zephyrs
Whisper secrets from On High;
Oh, how lovely they, at sunrise,
When the dews on spindles lie!

Thus, I might go on to mention Chestnuts, elms and spruces tall, Mingling with the larches graceful In each leafy, forest hall, Where the notes of thrush and robin Tell us we should love them all!

DEATH'S ANGEL

(In memory of my late Father, Mark J. Folsom)

He came, at last,—that Angel, Awaited long, in vain; He came, and, oh, so gently, He soothed my Father's pain:

His hand, (soft, cool, caressing,)
On fevered brow he laid;
Each furrow swiftly vanished,
Was smooth as marble made:

He touched his bosom lightly, And breathing easy grew; O'er mild, brown eyes the curtains, In tenderness, he drew:

He whispered words of gladness
Which brought to lips a smile;
He hushed his heart's quick beating,—
That heart which knew no guile:

And, then, just like a mother
By babe in cradle deep,
He calmed him with his presence
Until he dropped asleep;

When, sealing lips, forever, He stilled his flutt'ring breath, And stamped upon his forehead, "He lives! this isn't Death!"

Reveille, ne'er, will wake him To meet his country's foe! No more, 'neath starry banner, To war he'll bravely go!

For, in that blesséd Country, (In which he woke, this morn,) The inmates, pure and lovely, To perfect peace are sworn:

He fought earth's battles, nobly!
The vict'ry he hath won!
He's earned the Crown Eternal
And heard the words. "Well done!"

No criticising finger
Can show a deed of shame!
He leaves a glowing record,—
A bright, untarnished name!

Oh, grant me, God in Heaven, That I may meet, some day, My grand, my noble Father Who walks the Higher Way!

FAIRY BLUETS

In some small, open glade of the dim forest old, Where the club moss peeps out from the dark, rich, earth mould,

Where the bracken unrolls her loose spirals of

And the flash of the fire-bird, so often, is seen, Should you searchingly seek, on some early May

When the bluebird is singing his clear roundelay, You might spy on the slope of the upland a sight Which would fill your kind heart with the sheerest

For, before you would stand, 'neath the gray, chilly

Quite a group of court ladies, scarce three inches high.

Dressed in palest of blue, with gold crowns on brows bright,

All a-nodding and bowing to left and to right; And, near by, on her throne, (twined with cin-

quefoil, so green,)

In her purple, dew-decked, their loved violet-queen, Drooping low her fair face to her courtiers' praise

Which they, over and over, so gayly repeat; Yet, not one of their words can your dull hearing

Tho' you bend low above that one phrase you may

And the keen, raw, spring wind may blow hard and

blow cold, Yet, the little, court ladies, with hearts stanch and

fast.

Will continue to bow and to bend to the gust, Ev'ry spring, till our bodies shall moulder to dust: Then, God bless you, ye dainty, pale bluets, so fair, In your blue, evening dresses and coronets rare, For, no matter how strong be the breeze, or how

You will gracefully courtesy in the teeth of the

Cheering on hopeless hearts with the promise of

When the Rose, in her beauty, will bloom to God's praise!

A HEROINE OF THE SEA

On a wind-swept, wave-washed, rugged rock, In famed Newport's harbor fair, Where, on stormy nights, the sea-birds flock, Thither drawn by lime-light glare,

Stands a small, but, strong-built structure square, 'Gainst whose bulwarks, in a gale, Dashes waves so high that none would dare To approach by oar or sail:

And, for fifty years, the pharos light Hath been kept by one most brave, Who, each half-hour, wakes throughout the night That some sailor she may save:

Once, her form was of a goddess tall, With bright eyes and hair of jet; But, the sea hath let its spray down-fall, Whitening locks, abundant, vet:

And her hero heart is just as stout As it was, that fearful day, When she launched her dory, rowing out, Thro' the snow and sleet, o'er bay,

With no shoes upon her firm, young feet, (Thick, soft hair, sole coif for head,) To drag forth from surges, icy, fleet, Drowning soldiers, well-nigh dead:

At eight diff'rent times, her boat she's launched, Since, as lass, she watched the light, And her nerve's, ne'er, failed, nor cheek's e'er

blanched

As o'er Death she's won the fight:

And, tho' medals, silver and of gold, Of her brav'ry witness bear, And, tho' tales, by scores, have oft been told Of her wondrous courage rare,

In the Lime-Rock Lighthouse, glistening white, Round which billows roar and dash, Ida Lewis tendeth, still, the light Lest the cruel rocks should gash

The great ocean liner's mighty side Or the pleasure boat's frail keel; And these vessels, ev'ry one, confide In this heroine's deep zeal:

Ida Lewis, may thy fearless heart Beat for twenty years, and more! May you, long, pursue your peaceful part On that rocky islet's shore!

When the God of Storms each rock doth veil In a sheet of mist and spray,

And His voice is heard upon the gale, As it will at the Judgment Day,

May thy loving fingers, skilled tho' old, Trim the gleaming, beacon light To guide, safely, faithful seamen bold Thro' the perils of the night!

(Miss Lewis passed away since the foregoing lines were written.)

THREE FATES

No doubt, you've seen, full many a time, A picture, (limned by a hand sublime,) Of female figures three;— One, young and blonde; one in her prime; And one o'er whom the storms of time Have raged, for years, in glee:

The first spins Life's slight, slender thread;
The second, (of the peerless head
And form mature and fair,)
Holds Life's soft, subtile, cobweb line;
While she, (the sere and withered vine,)
To snip the thread doth dare:

Now, o'er my life the Spirits three, (I trust may float in love o'er me Till loosed is silver cord,) Are, all, in womanhood mature, With faces sweet and longings pure,— The blesséd of the Lord:

The first, (upon whose faultless head
A halo grand of gold is shed,
In shape of ringlets bright,)
Grasps firmly, in her lily hand,
A lyre whose strings her breath hath fanned
To tones of music light:

The next, whose coils of nut-brown hair Shade eyes of gray, (a thoughtful pair,) Holds close to breast inspired A manuscript, whereon is traced A score of tuneful verses chaste, To write which, ne'er, she's tired:

The last, whose orbs of lustrous blue Gleam clear 'neath curls of ebon hue, In shapely left hand white A palette holds with colors torn From rosy skies that greet the morn; While, with her skilful right

She sketches forms of nature, true,-

The rolling waves of ocean blue Or towering mountain height; And, yet again, a woodland wide Thro' which a brawling brook doth glide 'Mong ferns and mosses bright:

So, each fair Fate, who, on her part,
(By music, poetry or art,)
Would stir the unemployed,
Will you, my Friend, if her you seek,
Raise up from states of knowledge weak;
And, then, you'll find you buoyed

To richer realms of thought, until, (Beneath her magic power and will,) Each second short will glow With sounds of rapture, words of love, Ideals of beauty, (born Above,) Whence streams of transport flow!

Then, bide with me, ye Sisters Three,— Ye lovely Fates, (from whom doth flee All sordid thoughts impure,) And, never, leave me, but, inspire To thoughts of rapt and holy fire Which shall to death endure!

VALUE MORE HIGHLY YOUR PEARLS!

Lady fair, in whose rich, raven ringlets You've just twined a pearl fillet superb, As you toy with the beautiful trinket, Doth no thought of its worth you disturb?

Don't you see, on the breast of far ocean, A light skiff anchored fast in the sand That lies low 'neath the surface of waters Which by scorching sea-breezes are fanned?

Don't you note the dark-skinned, naked savage, (With a bag round his neck firmly tied,)
Now, preparing to dive to the bottom
Of the sea with rare oyster-shells pied,

Which he'll scrape in a pile with deft fingers
And plunge rapidly into the sack?
By a rope, then, be hauled in the row-boat,
When brain reels and keen eyesight grows black?

And, when waking from lethargy death-like, Don't you notice the small, paltry sum He receives for the dangerous labor Which the blood in his ears makes to hum?

Just enough to keep children from starving;

Not sufficient life's needfuls to buy, While the pearls in the shells he hath gathered, (Which, in pride, 'mong your tresses you tie,)

Sold for hundreds of gleaming, gold ducats, You paid out from your purse without thought Of the poor, wretched, Indian diver, Who, thro' depths of the deep, them hath sought:

But, hereafter, my grand, gracious lady, When you lift from their casket your pearls, Breathe a prayer for the indigent diver, For his wife and his wee, baby girls!

And most precious esteem the gems shining, Snatched from hiding beneath the sea blue By the zeal of a poor fellow-mortal, Who the fruits of his toil sent to you!

MY CHILDHOOD'S HOME

Where-e'er on earth I roam, By mountain, lake or stream, I, ne'er, forget my childhood's home,— A lowly cot, 'neath Heaven's blue dome, Near San Francisco Bay's white foam, That's gold in sunset's gleam:

In an oak's refreshing shade
The humble cottage stood;
And, 'mong the leaves, which, ne'er did fade,
A swing was hung, where I, a maid
In frock of common print arrayed,
Let, "Die old cat!" of wood:

Before, a sward there lay
Of living green, so rare,
Wide-strewn with blossoms bright and gay,—
A brilliant carpet, fit for fay
To tread upon when on her way
To dance with brownies fair:

Against the sapphire sky Rose Mount Diablo grim; Upon his heavy head, so high, A crystal crown of ice did lie; And gentle rain or zephyr's sigh Could melt not e'en its rim:

When weary of my ride,—
The scene of snowy mount,
With playful collie at my side,
I'd watch the slowly ebbing tide,
And, on the sandy beach, so wide,
Its scattered shells I'd count:

Then, tired of this sweet play,
With dog beloved, I'd race
Along the curving beach of bay,
Above which seabirds winged their way,
My heart-strings pulled by the plaintive lay
That echoed far thro' space:

When paused I by the sea,
To list its soothing song,
My faithful collie, full of glee,
(Who took such loving care of me,)
Would stand a-watching at my knee
Lest something should go wrong:

Oh, Alameda fair,—
The Land of Flower and Fruit,
Would I might leave these regions bare
And to thy charming courts repair,
Where I would sit me down, fore'er,
To sing thy fair repute!

AN AUTUMN DRIVE

(Dedicated to Miss Alma S .----)

'Twas a morn in bright September, When the air was fresh and sweet, Sweet as e'er I can remember, After days of scorching heat,

That a gentle-hearted maiden Kindly took me on a drive Where the busy bee, deep-laden, Gathered honey for the hive;—

Past poor cots and mansions lordly, Perched on terraces of green, Past fair meadows sloping broadly Down to silver lakes between:

And a holy peace seemed drooping
O'er the rural scene, so fair,
As the turning leaves came trooping
Down from gorgeous maples rare:

Soft, the cooling breeze caressing
Breathed on neck and brow and hair;
Sweet, the falling leaves, in blessing,
Kissed our happy faces bare:

Plump, brown Bobby, sleek and shining, Needing, ne'er, the touch of whip, Well obeyed the hand confining Clad in tan to finger tip:

And that hand, encased in leather,

To a lass belonged most sweet,— Sweet and sensible and clever As I, e'er, have chanced to meet;

With her curls the zephyrs dallied, Bringing blushes faint to face, As the roadside asters rallied To eclipse her eyes' bright grace:

I was pleased to watch the lassie, With her pretty manner sweet, As we dashed by lowlands grassy, Spread out fair before our feet;

And shall, ne'er, forget the pleasure Winding rustic roadways o'er, Whilst I morning's joy shall measure By the look the maiden wore:

To her golden locks, (so curling,)
To her merry eyes of blue,
To her heart, (so truly sterling,)
I inscribe these stanzas few!

May she ride behind her pony Over upland, vale and plain, By the brook, o'er pathways stony, In the sunshine, snow or rain,

Ev'ry day, dispensing gladness, As she did, one morn, to me, From each soul dispelling sadness By her cheery laugh of glee!

And may, never, Time, so active, Spoil that simple, child-like grace Which to me is more attractive Than her loveliness of face!

FRITZ, MY COLLIE, AND I

Delving deep in the bogs, before breakfast,
For marsh-marigolds gleaming with gold,
Searching roadsides for violets hidden
Beneath leaves all discolored with mould,
When the sun's low in sky,
Should you look, should you spy,
There will roam Fritz, my collie, and I!

'Neath the shade of the wide-spreading maples,
When the clouds float so light overhead,
Where wild-carrots bow low in the breezes,
Thro' the church-yard, (where rev'rently tread
The shy chipmonks who vie
With the bee buzzing by,)
Frisks about Fritz, my collie, and I!

When dark clouds scud before autumn breezes, And dry leaves pile the pavement, knee-deep, When the golden-rod nods by the highway, Faded, dusty and heavy with sleep, When fringed gentians we tie In bouquets, soon to die, Hie in haste Fritz, my collie, and I!

When the roads and the trees and the meadows Glisten brightly with jewels most rare, When relentless Jack Frost nips the fingers Of the poor, little lad with hands bare, Wading wide thro' drifts high, Perhaps, all wonder why Wander on Fritz, my collie, and I!

Maybe, far in the Happy Hereafter,
On the fair, everlasting, green hills,
Where the glittering sunshine shall filter
Thro' the trees on the soft, rippling rills,
I may see a bright eye
And may hear a glad cry,
When, to welcome me, Fritzie will hie!

VERSES TO A BUTTERFLY

Hail to thee, glorious Spirit, Charming creature of radiant mould, Flitting fast onward and fleeing From each thing that corruption doth hold!

Poising thy beautiful body
On thy delicate, gossamer wing;
Sipping clear nectar and honey
From sweet flowers whose corollas outfling,

Fast, thro' the air, purer incense
Than is burned by the priest in yon fane;
Happy, yet, striving, oh, ever,
For a world still more fair, yet, to gain;

Hast thou, O insect, so lovely, Quite forgotten thy gross, earthly state, When thou didst crawl in thy vileness, And all shunned thee, alas! in their hate?

Didst thou, O beauteous being, E'en imagine what might be thy fate, Whilst thou lay dormant and dreaming In that strange, torpid, chrysalis state?

As, from a worm, so unsightly,
Was developed the butterfly bright,
So, may I hope, in like manner,
By the love and the power of God's might,

Some time, this body, so sinful, May exchanged be for one most divine, (House of ineffable beauty,) For this restless, sick soul, here, of mine!

May I, dear Lord, like the insect, In a grander and holier sphere, Thoughts lose of earth life, so sordid, In delights that will, there, then, appear!

Clothed in white garments immortal, On swift pinions, which cleave the pure air, Fleet, may I glide o'er the mountains, When, at eve, fitful shadows they bear!

And, may my soul with contentment
Be filled full, when, redeemed by God's Love,
Tasks I pursue, as commissioned,
In that boundless, bright Home, up Above!

ON THE MAIN-TRUCK

In Portsmouth Harbor, long ago, A ship at anchor lay Whose streamers danced in many a row Along the bowsprit gay:

Against the keel the wavelets curled And sang a hornpipe light; The sunshine sank on sails unfurled And turned them dazzling white:

Each mast and spar in sunbeam light Gleamed out like burnished gold; But, on the deck, (a fairer sight,) Stood a boy, scarce four years old:

A smile of joy lit face, so fair, As gazed he o'er the sea; The breezes dallied with the hair That almost touched his knee:

He looked aloft where smiled the sky; He peered at yonder mast, And brightly beamed his azure eye To see its flag fly fast:

Unnoticed by the busy crew,
Unseen by Captain Good,
The tiny youngster thoughtful grew,
As 'neath a spar he stood:

At length, he nimbly climbed the mast,—
(An agile monkey, he,)
And, 'fore the seamen's eyes aghast,
On the main-truck high, in glee,

Upon his stomach small he lay;
(A speck he seemed in air,)
Far gazing o'er the land-locked bay,
To childish eyes how fair!

Like statues, on the deck clean-swept Stood captain, crew and mate; And, close beside, the mother wept At lad's most likely fate:

No word was spoken; not a cry Escaped their lips of stone; And, there, the boy, on the main-truck high Lay happy, yet, alone!

No thought had he, that urchin brave, (A sailor truly born,) Of anything save sky and wave, That charming, June-time morn:

At last, to earth his mind returned, And down the mast he slid, With dimpled cheeks, which brightly burned, In tangled curls half hid:

At friends' reproving accents, mild He looked in grave surprise; But, no one dared to scold the child, So guileless, yet, so wise:

This fearless boy, of whom I speak, To ripened manhood grew, And gray grew locks that stroked his cheek, And dim grew eyes of blue;

But, love of ocean's billows bright
In Grandpa's bosom lay
As deep as when, from the main-truck's height,
He gazed o'er Portsmouth Bay!

AMONG THE PINES OF KEARSARGE

At the foot of a mountain, clothed ever
In its kirtle of redolent pine,
Stands a house, and, beyond the small clearing,
Grows the forest primeval, divine:

In the midst of this wood a wee streamlet Softly murmurs a chant, as it flows, Of a mound, on its bank, strewn with spindles, Where the calumet hides from its foes:

But, the brook feareth much lest some vandal Will discover the flower near his wave, And uproot waxen bloom which would blacken, All unshrived and unwept, in its grave: A big boulder, (now, hoary with ages,) Seamed and scarred by the lightning's fell stroke, Daily, lists to this dirge, so pathetic, As around his gaunt figure a cloak

Of gray mosses and lichens he foldeth, Fettered feet being kissed, 'neath his dress, By the cool, wimpling waves of the brooklet Who loves well his old friend to caress:

On the top of this boulder four people, Often, seated themselves to enjoy The scene sylvan spread out, there, before them, And to read where no discords annoy;

But, the Sprite of the Spot cast her glamour O'er the page they had come to peruse; They were held in the magical clutches Of the whimsical, coy Woodland Muse;

They saw nothing but clear, dimpling wavelets Softly laving the velvety sod;— Far above them, green boughs overarching Like a beautiful temple of God:

And they heard nothing else than the music Of the gurgling, low-splashing hill-stream, Or the notes of the redbreast and bluebird As they warbled their summer day's dream:

Each could feel in his heart love for only
The three others who on the rock lay,
For the birds, for the brook and the boulder,
And the beautiful, midsummer day:

So, whene'er I turn over the pictures
In the casket of memory laid,
I look, long, at the one of the brooklet,
'Neath the pines of Mt. Kearsarge made;

And I hope those three friends, (now, far distant,)
The sweet lady, young man, merry boy,
Sometimes, see the same scene as the writer
Who can, ne'er, the loved picture destroy!

LINES TO THE STORMY PETREL

Bird of the boundless sea,
Fearless in flight and free,
Silent art thou skimming over the bay!
Emblem of storms to be,
Full is thine heart of glee!
Oh, once, to see thee, when ocean grows gray!

Loud is thy lay and clear,
When the wild tempest's near,
Warning the sailor to reef ev'ry sail!
When dost, O Bird, thou rest?
Where is thy rocky nest?
How findest thou food in the furious gale?

Black is thy plumage rare!

Small is thy figure fair,

Skirting the crests of the waves running high!

Strong are the wings which bear

Thee o'er the ocean where

Roll the rough billows delighting thine eye!

Wee Stormy Petrel bright,

Gay in a gale of might,

Thou hast a name right well suited to thee,

Walking upon the wave.

Walking upon the wave, Crying not, "Lord, oh, save!" But, trusting in Him who controls the deep seal

ORION

Thou warrior, born of the ox's hide, Who wooed Diane as thy chosen bride, But, lost thy life at thy sweetheart's hand As the sea you waded, far from land,

In lovely autumn, each frosty night, I see you kneeling, alone, in fight; And brightly gleameth the glaive of gold You take not, e'er, in your hand so bold!

At two o'clock, in the stilly night, I've looked at thee on yon heavenly height, And seen Diane, in the azure east, Gaze, proud, at thee, as you fought the beast!

No grander sight in the welkin blue Can, Orion, we, ever, see than you With golden girdle and star-spurred heel, As, there, with taurus you, nightly, kneel!

And, Warrior, thou dost not notice me, As, full of wonder, I gaze on thee! Thou art, by far, too much occupied To think of any the bull beside!

I dread the time when you fall from sight, For, wind and rain follow fast thy flight! But, gay I'll be at your glad return, When bright your belt of three stars shall burn!

WHAT IS THINE AIM?

What's the goal of thine ambition? What the zenith of thy hope?

46

What, the dream of youth and manhood? What, the end towards which you grope?

Dost thou aim to be possessor Of old Ophir's mines of gold? Dost thou crave the sparkling jewels Which dear Mother Earth doth hold?

Dost aspire to carve in marble, Or, on canvas to portray Forms, which all but breathe, so truly Doth thy hand clear thought obey?

Dost thou pant to move the nations With thine eloquence to tears? Wouldst thou thrill all music lovers With thy songs, each, spell-bound, hears?

Dost thou long to sway the sceptre O'er republics, grand and old? Or to hold the magic baton Over mighty armies bold,

And to dye the sod bright scarlet,
Whilst the wind thro' cedars green
Chants low masses for the dying,
Tho' no mourner, there, is seen?

"No," methinks I hear thee answer;
"No, for me have these no charm!
Life's deep dream hath been, forever,
To but be a healing balm

"To the weary, sick and friendless;—
To each broken-hearted soul
To whom Life is but a burden;—
O'er whom Death's dark waves would roll!

"I would be the blesséd bearer Of those living waters pure, Which, from everlasting fountains, Spring up, fresh, to, e'er, endure!

"I would speak sweet words of kindness, Which, in tones of rustic rhyme, May re-echo in the chambers Of their souls, throughout all time,

"To uplift them, soothe them, cheer them, Let them learn that God is Love; That He, never, will forsake them Till they reach His Home Above!"

BIRD VESPERS

Within ten minutes' walk of where I dwell doth stand

As great and grand a temple as is found in all our land;

Its fretted vault's upheld by many a colonnade
Of pillars, crowned by friezes fair as human hands
e'er made:

No stained glass windows keep the light from streaming thro';

streaming thro';
The sun and shade mosaics make on pavements

damp with dew;
No off'ring's, ever, asked in this cathedral bright
Except a heart pure, true and free from ev'ry gross

Except a heart pure, true and free from ev'ry gross delight:

The splendid gates are open throughout the livelong night,

And, yet, no thief breaks thro' to steal communion service bright;

For, dainty cups are blooms of violets, so blue, And salvers, each, are acorn cups all braided thro' and thro':

Inside the ample nave a host could kneel in prayer And, yet, from morn till dewy eve, no worshiper is there;

On mighty transept floor the ear detects no tread; From chancel rail to arches high 'tis silent as the dead:

The cloisters are forsaken; no monk, in gown of grav.

Now, kneels on checkered, leaf-strewn floor to weep or, e'en, to pray;

No friar at font is seen to make the sign of the cross;

The sunshine floods archaded aisles thro' oriels, green with moss:

But, when the sunset stains façade with rosy light, When vesper bells are softly swayed by gentle winds of night,

Then, fast, to stalls ascend, in surplices and beads, A thousand, barefoot acolytes who loudly say their creeds:

The wingéd canon clearly chants, from th' altar

"Cantate Domino!" till vault of gold, so broad and high,

Now, fading into blue, re-echoes with the sound Of vast, bird choir and organ of the winds, so sweet, profound: And, when the mass is o'er, and laymen, all, have heard

The, "Dominus vobiscum!" ev'ry rev'rent, waiting bird

Bows low, until, "In pace vade!" shakes the air, Then, thro' the great cathedral, each one sinks in silent prayer:

The service, now, is done; the priest has left his throne:

At th' altar kneel a dozen friars, in cassocks black, alone;

The breezes swing the bells in leafy turrets tall; The congregation's fast asleep within that heavenly hall.

ERE FALLS THE BLESSED EVENTIDE

(To my Friend, Mrs. Belle F.)

Ere falls the blesséd eventide In benediction on the day, While yet the sky with rose is dyed, I love, alone, to steal away

To yonder hillside slope, so green, Where sunny rays the longest stay, And where the morning light is seen The first on ev'ry gladsome day:

I love to stroll the walks along, Beneath the old, majestic trees, And list the birds' sweet, goodnight song, And feel the freshening, evening breeze:

The chipmonk stares at me, ere, fast, Along the stony wall he leaps; And, sometimes, as I wander past, From headstone high a sparrow peeps:

I hear the crickets chirp, "Goodnight," As o'er the sod I softly tread; No living person is in sight, Alone, I walk where lie the dead:

Below the hill, o'er meadows wide, From many a cot gleams out a light; But, here, alone, some grave beside, I linger on, as falls the night:

I feel that God is nearer me, Right here, when falls the eventide, Than elsewhere that I, e'er, can be In this great world, so round and wide; And, as o'er one low bed I bend To lay fresh wildflowers it above, I pray my Father strength to lend To her, whose heart, so full of love,

Is racked with grief and dire despair, As comes she here to sigh and weep; Who feels her burden hard to bear; Her cup of sorrow far too deep:

And, when she kneels to weep and pray Beside her darling, eldest son, Oh, let it be at close of day, When household duties all are done!

Then, fill her soul, so sad and worn, With holy quiet of the hour!— With peaceful calm which here is born Like fragrance in the wayside flower!

And, when she wends her way, at length, Towards lonely homestead in the vale, Oh, may she feel renewed her strength By Him whose love will, never, fail!

WALLACE AT THE BATTLE OF STIR-LING

(Fought about two miles from Stirling, near Kildean Bridge)

Forty thousand Scottish yeomen By the River Forth did wait, Standing on the purple heather, Ev'ry soul deep-fired with hate;

And their Leader, William Wallace, Huge of size and brave of heart, Waited, too, for the invaders With strange calmness on his part:

Right in front, a bridge lay, narrow; And on this his eyes were cast, Watching till five thousand English O'er this wooden bridge had passed:

Two by two, they crossed in silence, Armed with spear and strong cross-bow, Gazing, with intense defiance, At the seeming helpless foe:

Not a plume on Scottish bonnets Had, as yet, to stir been seen; Now, they, ev'ry feather, fluttered, And the Chieftain's accents keen Broke the silence with this order, "Forward to the foot of bridge! Let no more of English cross it!" When, Scots, left upon the ridge,

Heard, again, with bosoms beating, "Down, with me, on those this side!" And, before the British army,
Those five thousand, quickly, died,—

Cut to pieces by the Scotchmen, Who, in fury, slew their chief, Making horse-whips, in derision, Of his royal skin, in brief:

And, as none dared cross the foot-bridge, In the face of England's foe, Wallace won the Fight at Stirling, Long, long centuries ago.

PERFIDY'S REWARD

Fierce frowned the Roman fortress fine Above the Tiber's tide; High on the famed Capitoline, Divided from the Palatine By marshes wet and wide:

Here, in the ancient fortress strong
The chieftain's daughter dwelt;
On the fresh breezes fell her song,
As, with the stream, that swept along,
The girl contentment felt:

But, when she glanced to where the foe Among the meadows lay, Slow grew her girlish song and low, As, in the sunlight's gleaming glow Flashed out the armlets gay

All of the Sabine soldiers wore,
While brighter beamed her eye
Looking upon the chains they bore
On bosoms to be stained with gore,
In battle, by and by:

Envy and grudging for the gold Filled young Tarpeia's breast; Avarice made the maiden bold, As thro' her brain a project rolled She, soon, put to the test:

Ere dawned another sunny day, A message sent the maid Pledging the Sabines to betray The Roman citadel, so gray; But, this, alone, she prayed;

"Give me the shining things you wear Upon your arms and breast! Give me these things, and I will swear That thro' the gates you, all, shall fare Ere Phoebus sinks to rest!"

This the brave men agreed to do;
And, watching for her chance,
Down to the gates the damsel flew,
And, opening them, there filed them thro'
The foe with bow and lance:

But, as the faithless one they passed, Inside the citadel, Shields from their arms the Sabines cast Upon the girl, and hurried fast Ere pealed th' alarum bell:

Crushed by the bucklers, shining bright,
The lass lay lifeless, there,
Slain for her treachery, that night,
By those who reckoned might was right,
But, deemed no traitor fair!

WISH FOR A SUMMER VACATION

(To my Friend, Mrs. Susan P---)

May thine heart be filled with gladness, Thro' thy summer holiday, Sitting, there, beside the borders Of delightful Onset Bay!

As you watch the ebbing waters Break in foam upon the sand; As you gather polished pebbles Flung, each day, upon the land;

As you look on mighty ocean, And the heaving of his chest; As you see the sun, each gloaming, When he seeks his well-earned rest;

As you gaze upon the splendor Of the crystal water's tide, When Diana flings her banner O'er the rolling ocean wide;

As you watch huge vessels vanish O'er old Neptune's curving rim; As their sails grow faint and ghostly, And their hulls becometh dim: As you feel the swift-winged zephyrs Cool your browned and burning brow; As you shudder at the tempest Which bears death upon its prow;

As you listen to the murmur
Which the wavelets sing of home;—
To the screaming of the sea-birds,
When, in flocks, they skyward roam;

As you bathe your throbbing temples In the flood, so cool and clear; Let your thoughts, my Friend belovéd, And your eyes, without a tear,

Look beyond the tossing ocean, E'en, beyond that Shining Sea, Where a Loved One stands a-waiting Till thy spirit shall be free!

Till he hears the Angel Pilot,
(Watching on that River's Bank,)
Say that which, for years, he's listened,
And for which he God will thank:—

Those sweet words, "A sail!" will echo O'er the swift and shining Stream; And the Pearly Gates will open To receive you, in a dream!

Just a few, short years, remember, And that Sea, like Onset Bay, (Only just a little fairer In the light of Perfect Day,)

On its breast will bear us travellers
To the great and Pure White Throne,
Where account we both must render;
Where Our Father will condone!

So, today, as, there, you ponder
By those waters, blue and bright,
Think of when we two shall gather
Round that Sea which knows no night!

ARACHNE

On yon casement's cobwebbed corner, Howsoever dark the day, In her dusty, cheerless castle Sits a little lady gray, Ever watching for some stroller Who may hap her way to stray:

If, by chance, a luckless traveller Open gateway passes by, To the top of spiral staircase, (Where, in state, the dame doth lie,) He will venture, always, wond'ring Whither leads these stairs so high:

At the top, the dazed wayfarer
By the gracious dame is met,
(In her soft, gray gown, so silken,
Setting off her eyes of jet,)
And, extending hands, in welcome,
Lo! the stranger's in a net!—

In a snare of turret chamber, (Up in yonder castle high,)
Spun by tiny, gray, old lady,
In the casement coin, near by;
And this snare is but a spider's,
And its prey, a silly fly!

Once, this tricky, artful spider
Was a Grecian maiden gay,
Taught to weave by wise Minerva,
And, so perfect, legends say,
Was her web, she dared to challenge
Her great teacher fair, one day,

To a trial of her weaving, And, in guise of woman old, Wise Minerva warned the damsel To desist from boastings bold; But, the maiden, still persisting, Took the goddess, we are told,

Proper form, and, then, accepting Challenge of the daring lass, Girl and goddess set to weaving On the dew-bespangled grass, Shuttles making magic music, As thro' webs they swift did pass:

But, the subjects, chose by damsel, Gave offence to goddess fair; So, she struck her bold opponent, Sev'ral times, on forehead bare, With the shuttle she was using In this contest, strange and rare:

Now, the proud and haughty maiden
This effront so ill could brook
That she hung herself, soon after,
In a gloomy, lonely nook,
And the goddess, then, relenting,
Turned the lass, (so late, forsook,)

To a spider, called Arachne, And she spins and weaves, to-day, In the self-same, peerless manner
As when she, a damsel gay,
Wise Minerva called to combat,
In her bold and brazen way.

CLIMBING MOOSILAUKE

When Woodstock's rural village Had scarce from sleep awoke, When birds were carols singing Because the dawn had broke, We left the homes of men, (The valley, mead and fen,) To wind our way, That summer day, 'Mong haunts of fairy folk:

Behind, we left the daisies,
Which starred the meadows green;—
Behind, the crimson clover
And buttercups' bright sheen;
In leafy shades, instead,
We saw, on mossy bed,
With blushing cheek,
So gay, yet meek,
The partridge-berry lean:

We spied within the forest,
(Which seemed to have no end,)
Fern coverts where the fairies
Their magic wands might mend;
Or, where the brownie folk
The calumet might smoke,
And strike a light
From berries bright
On dwarf cornels which bend:

The chestnuts, oaks, bronzed beeches,
And silver birches, too,
We left far down the mountain
All bathed in gleaming dew;
And, now, the tall pine bold,
Spruce, hemlock, (green, tho' old,)
Spread arms on high
To veil the sky
From eazer tourists' view:

The way grew steep and rugged;
Steeds sturdy tugged and sweat,
The straggling sunbeams stealing
Thro' boughs that o'er us met;
At length, we drew the rein,
And left the clumsy wain

To quench our thirst At springs which burst, Beside us, clear as jet:

Then, after resting horses,
We clambered up the height,
Our foreheads fanned by breezes,
Eyes charmed by vistas bright,
The solemn stillness deep
Each making silence keep,
And breathe a prayer
Thro' the holy air
Of woodland wilds of might:

We seemed the only humans
Upon this earthly sphere,
And, yet, we gazed in rapture
Because we felt no fear;
Tho' tongues gave forth no word,
To notes of praise was stirred
Each traveller's heart,
Which, on its part,
Was poet, sage or seer:

And, now the pines primeval
Grew scattered, few and small;
The bracing breeze grew chilly,
And gone was greenwood hall;
Above us bent the sky,
Of perfect azure dye,
In which the sun,
(His work half done,)
Seemed set,—a topaz ball:

Behold! upon the summit!
The rocky top so bare!
Here, tufts of hardy sandwort
'Mong mosses gray, yet rare!
Alone, beneath the sky!
Alone, beneath God's eye,
And, spread below,
A goodly row
Of queenly crests, so fair,

Who doff their ice tiaras,
Each spring, and kneel around
This Monarch of the Mountains,—
Great Moosilauke renowned;—
A titan old, yet strong,
(The theme of poets' song,)
Who looks in pride,
But, finds no bride
'Mong all those maids uncrowned!

ELEGY TO TIME

Look not upon the past! 'tis fled!

Nurse not its sin or sorrow,
For, they're no longer thine! they're dead,

And are not fit to borrow!

Enough of trial brings the day
Without the burdens bearing
Of days which, now, have passed away
Beyond our ken or caring!

Gaze not upon the coming morn
With too much mirth or gladness!
Tomorrow's sun may, never, dawn
Or bring you woe and madness!

Shrink not to see the future day!
Thy fears may prove ungrounded,
And, ere the night, thy ringing lay
May show thy bliss unbounded!

The present is the only hour
Which nought to us denyest;—
When we may have it in our power
To do and dare the highest!

Then, let us grasp the moments fleet
That come our way, once, only!
The seconds we may make most sweet
Or sorrow-bearers lonely!

DIANA AND HER DOGS

Thro' crowded shopping districts I trudged with tired feet,

The mercury at ninety, my blood at fever heat, When, in a large shop-window, there met my dazzled eyes

A handsome, steel engraving of more than moderate size:

No longer, feet were tired; no longer, head was hot; The blinding glare from pavement stones, in truth, I heeded not;

The jostling of bystanders, (the sickening, stifling air,)

The deafening din of traffic, no more, were hard to bear;

For, suddenly, from Boston, in smut and smoke and smell.

I went to merry England, forevermore, to dwell,— To live,—a loyal subject, in that blest isle, so green, Reigned o'er by good King Edward and by his lovely Queen: The scene, portrayed on paper, so realistic seemed, Methought the sun, in summer, on Sandringham bright beamed;

Methought I heard the barking of English setters rare

That gamboled round the figure of Alexandra fair,

Who stood,—a sweet Diana, amid her canine band, Some dainty morsel off'ring from out her shapely hand

To one who seemed the monarch of all those brutes high-bred,—

Their Prince, their King, their Leader, their Suzerain, their Head:

The tidbit lay so tempting in Queen's small palm of white;

The setter's dark eyes sparkled like lustrous orbs of night;

But, still, he stood reluctant the bit of sweets to take,

Tho' Alexandra urged him to eat it for her sake:

His Mistress was an Empress; yet, was not he the King

Of all these noble creatures who formed round her a ring,

A-yelping and a-whining her Majesty to see? Ah! Why should he,—their Sovereign, a wretched gormand be?

"Ah! No, my royal Mistress, more honor 'tis to kiss Those beautiful, white fingers! No higher joy than this!"

And, so, he stands before her,—the grandest of his

Before the Queen of Beauty, of Gentleness, of Grace!

Oh, might I own this picture of England's stately Queen

Among her loved grandchildren and dogs of regal mien!

For, I'm a friend devoted of ev'ry dog I see,

Much more of dogs of breeding, of dogs of high degree!

And, then, this model Mother, this Wife and Queen so true.

This pure and noble Lady, with eyes of heavenly blue,

Is just the type in woman of all that's good and sweet!

Oh, may I, some bright morning, this fair Diana greet!

NEEHDAM

Oh, Needham, charming Needham, Were I but fitted, now, To wreathe a crown of poesy For thine unsullied brow!

Thy people, quiet, kindly, Have hearts of uncoined gold; And deep respect of ev'ry man The sires of Needham hold!

Thy hills are crowned with forests Among which houses hide,— The mansion grand and lowly cot, Where all in peace abide:

On many a sunny roadside
A pleasant schoolhouse stands,
Where scores of happy children flock,
Each morn, in merry bands:

And, then, on ev'ry Sabbath,
"To prayers!" the church-bells chime
From out their wooden turrets tall,
At vesper hours and prime:

Where, once, Nehoiden camp-fires Glanced weirdly towards the sky, Now, auto and electric car, At lightning speed, whiz by:

Thy streets are broad and shaded By trees, on either side, That interlace their loving arms Above the highways wide:

The air is pure and bracing,
The drinking-water clear;
The many shops are furnished well,
And prices are not dear:

How lovely are thy lowlands, When white with meadow-rue, Which lift aloft their haughty heads To look askance at you!

The wildflowers, all, are plenty,—
Tall asters, blue and white,—
The windflower fair which droops its head
To fill us with delight:

Nowhere, you'll find more splendid, More beauteous maple-trees, That sway and swing and bow and bend In summer's gladsome breeze; And, when in gorgeous autumn, They stand in scarlet clad, They show us, in their dying joy, How death may us make glad:

The birds love, here, to carol,—
(The chickadee and jay,
The oriole and bluebird shy,)
In morning roundelay;

And, those, in early springtime, Who rise the sun to greet, Will hear tree-sparrow melodies Most ravishingly sweet:

Oh, Needham, lovely Needham, I wish thee joy in store! Prosperity, in all its forms, I wish thee, evermore!

DEVIL'S BROOK

On a misty, April morning, When the clouds of rain gave warning, Bobby Burns and I set out upon our way Up the Glendale Road to rove, With the birds, in grot and grove, All, inviting us to make a longer stay!

But, we had to say, "Good morrow!"
To them, each, altho' in sorrow,
For, it was our purpose fixed to farther stray
To a stream, we'd seen not, yet,
(Much to mine and Bob's regret,)
Tho' in Sharon we'd abode for many a day:

As the roadway rough descended, Bob and I our steps down-bended, Ent'ring, soon, a pathway thro' the forest old; Here, the trees stood thick around, And, upon the sodden ground Broken birches lay,—the sport of tempests bold:

Here and there, a pine we sighted, Like a green-gowned lass benighted 'Mong the massive oaks and chestnuts bare and bold;

Or a shad-bush, clad in white, The bright bride of yesternight, Wasting all her sweetness on the wooded wold:

As the winding way I wended, By my faithful dog attended, Dark and dismal seemed the silent, leafless wood, Where no robin's carol rung, Where no rabbit leaped among The dry leaves that lined the ground on which I

stood:

All was lonely, here, and dreary,
And my steps grew slow and weary,
As of ghosts and goblins grim I grew in fear;
But, turn back I, never, could,
For, to see the stream I would,
Be the famous brooklet far, or, be it near!

In the distance, soon, we listed,
As the foot-path gently twisted
Past slim saplings, (bent and blasted by the gale,)
A strange murmur, faint and low,
As of breezes light which blow
Thro' the whisp'ring reeds that floor the tansied swale:

Then, as pushed we onward, deeper Thro' the wood, the way grew steeper; Ever downward, still, our falt'ring steps we bent; And the murmur louder grew Till a rushing sound we knew Like wild waters wight in rocky channels pent:

Then, the rush became a roaring, And, before my eyes adoring, Thro' an opening in the wildwood, I espied Devil's Brook; and, named 'twas well, For, the foaming current fell, With a demon's dreadful laughter, at my side:

"Follow me!" it cried, and, howling
Like the imp it is, or, growling
Like a rampant lion raging in his wrath,
'Twixt gray boulders bare it sprang,
While the echoes loudly rang,
As it hurled itself along its horrid path:

Foam and froth, from jaws a-gnashing,
On its bosom lay a-flashing
In the moisty, April morning's sombre light;
While the rocks, (it whirled away
On some far-back, distant day,)
Crouched around the monster, now, afraid to fight:

Far above, like spectres frowning, Stood a wood, the hills a-crowning, Looking dark and dun against the clouded sky; But, no motion made a tree To prevent that spirit free From his work of ruin made while tearing by: Full ten yards each side the torrent,
Where his flying feet abhorrent,
In the spring, had spurned the soft and yieldin

In the spring, had spurned the soft and yielding earth,

Not a bush or shrub or tree, In its beauty, could I see;

Where this brooklet blustered flowerets few had birth:

Long, I stood, there, watching, waiting, In the tumult ne'er abating, Awed by this,—Dame Nature's work, so grand, yet, dread; Then, I turned me in my track,

And to Sharon Town went back,

Feeling I had been in Hades with the dead!

So, if, Friends, you go a-hieing,
'Neath the chestnut trees a-sighing,
To the ramping, raging brook the dale adown,

Go, when summer clothes the trees
In their tender green, and bees
Sip sweet nectar from the forest flower's crown!—

When a drought hath curbed the anger Of the streamlet, and, in languor, Nymphs and dryads peep from ev'ry leafy tree!— When the redwing stoops to drink At the brooklet's rocky brink, Singing softly to his sweetheart, "Con-quer-ee!"

LAY OF THE MEADOWLARK

Gracefully perched on a tree, growing near
Where lies a nest made of grasses so neat,
Mat of the Moorland, each May-time, you'll hear
Name of the season to gayly repeat;
"Spring o' the year! Spring o' the year,
Surely, is here!"

Clear as a fife, yet, as soft as a flute; None who's once heard can its sweetness refute!

Mat of the Moorland is gaudily dressed,
Wearing a doublet of dark, grayish brown;
Black is his neckcloth, and yellow the vest
Fastened with ebony buttons adown;
"Spring o' the year! Spring o' the year!
Say! Do you hear?"
Yonder, he stands on that branchlet above,
Singing a lay to his dear, little Love!

Sitting on four tiny eggs, bluish white, Speckled with spots of a deep reddish brown, Patiently waits, from the morn till the night, Matthew's meek matron in rumpled-up gown; "Spring o' the year! Spring o' the year! Wife, I am here,
Close to the tussock of grass where you hide,—
Close to our house in the mead, green and wide!

"Soon as each chick chips its delicate shell, I shall stop singing; a family man,
Fast growing old, I may be; who can tell?
Searching for seeds, worms and bugs,—all I can;
Spring o' the year! Spring o' the year!
Listen, my Dear!

Pray that the reaper come not to our home Ere downy nestlings are ready to roam!

"Never fly up, should the fowler stray by!

He will not see you, if quiet you keep!

Never, he'll know where the dear nestlings lie,

Close 'neath your breast, where they've fallen
asleen:

Spring o' the year! Spring o' the year!
Nought will we fear!
Shabby's grown suit that I, once, thought so fine,—
Grown just the hue of the grass, Sweetheart mine!
None can detect from the grasses, so brown,

Either of us in his dull, dingy gown, If, only, quiet you're sure, Dear, to keep, There, with our babes 'neath your bosom asleep!"

MARCH

Old March hath come with searching gust; At city corners whirls the dust; The pretty maids their faces veil, And bend, like reeds, before the gale; Loose straws and papers run a race Before fierce March's frowning face; The house-blinds creak; on panes the blast Knocks briskly as he scurries past; And, out upon the marches wide He hurries on with swifter stride; But, by the lake, the alder swings Its catkins red, as loud he sings; Beside the pond, the willows burst Their silver buds they, long, have nursed; Beneath their armor, thin as lace, Each brooklet shows its smiling face, And rare are roundelays they sing, Because, once more, hath come the spring; Tho' bleak thy breath, the robin plumes His wing, (where, soon, the lilac blooms With perfume sweet will fill the air, And charm the eye with colors rare,) Then, makes a nest of mud and straw, Nor minds thy blasts, so keen and raw, But, trills his love-song, sweet and clear, On branchlet bare or fence-rail, near:

Blow on, cold March, o'er hill and dale! Your manner's rough, but, ne'er, you'll fail To bring, when all your bluster's o'er, Soft zephyrs fair and flowers, once more! So, tho' you make us cower, low, O'er hearths where burning embers glow, We love you, well, for what you bring,—The sweet, fair flowers of early spring!

SILVER WEDDING BELLS

(To my old Friend, Edith S---)

Sweet was the air with perfume rare; The starry welkin, bright; Banished, each carping, earthly care, On that,—thy nuptial night!

Never, the moonbeams lightly kissed A fair, young bride more pale, Looking a lovely, "Maid o' the Mist," In filmy, bridal veil!

Clearly the words were spoken, then, Which maiden made a wife;— Turning her lover, (blest of men,) To husband fond for life:

Twenty-five years away have crept Since thou, an envied bride, Out from the altar slowly swept At handsome husband's side:

Sunshine and shadow, grief and joy
Thy wedded life hath checked;
Azrael took thy first-born boy;
(Well-nigh, thy peace was wrecked:)

But, in good time, God gave to thee
Two more bright, baby boys,—
One, now, a man; one, near thy knee,
The dearest of thy joys!

Ring, Silver Bells, oh, ring, tonight, To tell old comrades dear Time hath not touched the Bride, so bright, Who waits your presence, here!

Still, you will find her, (say, oh, Bells,)
As slender as of yore!
Still, shine those eyes, where lovelight dwells,
As brown as years before!

Blessed of Our Father, for all time,

Be lives of Groom and Bride!— Happy and cheery till a chime, Again, rings, far and wide,—

That chime of Golden Bells, so sweet, Which rings for, ah! so few, But, which I pray may, yet, repeat Its lay, loved Friends, for you!

VENUS

Oh, thou beautiful star of the evening, (Fairest planet to me in the sky,) When thou sheddest thy light from the welkin, Thou dost bear me, in thought, up on high

Where thou sittest,—a queen on her dais, While around thee glow worlds of less light,— Stately ladies-in-waiting celestial, With their brows bound by diadems bright;

These fair stars,—thy hand-maidens, so charming, Gleam and twinkle, like sparks, in the sky, While thou shinest in calm, brilliant grandeur, Deigning, e'en, with Diana to vie!

For a part of the year, after twilight, Thy loved light glitters, clear, in the west; Whilst, for months, just a bit before sunrise, Thou dost charm weary watchers to rest!

It is strange that the name which we give thee, Oh, thou loveliest lamp in the dome, Is not that by which Ancients did know thee, When thou shone, ages past, o'er their home!

I have read that sweet Hesperus gentle Was the title gave they thee, at night, When thy beams thro' diaphanous ether Glistened, gladly, lone travellers to light!

But, at morn, ere great Phoebus were stirring,
When yon blue by thy radiance was riven,
(Like an all-seeing eye of protection,)
Then, proud Lucifer's name thou wert given!

Now, to us thou art she they called Venus, Who was born of the foam of the sea, And was blest with rare beauty immortal To entrance you, dear Reader, and me!

So, at eve, I await her appearance, And when flooded is earth with her light, From my heart there upsprings admiration For this glorious queen of the night!

A LONE WAYFARER

Intense had been the heat
Throughout that long and sultry, summer day,
Down-bending bearded wheat,
Which, in the dewy morn, had looked so gay,

And burning sere and brown
Each pennyroyal patch upon the sandy down:

But, late, that afternoon,
A heavy shower came down to all revive;
The greatest, grandest boon
That heaven could send to panting mortals live,
And ev'ry beast and bird,

And every beast and bird, (As well as man,) to deepest gratitude was stirred:

When, then, the rain was o'er,
To watch the fast declining god of day,
I set me down before

My cottage door, (like a happy child, at play,) And laughed like one to see

The raindrops gleam like gems on ev'ry bush and tree:

A rainbow in the east Unrolled its painted pinions on my sight, And, like a pagan priest,

And, like a pagan priest,

Stretched out its hands in blessing on the night,—

A night which promised well

Long hours of sweet repose to those on earth that dwell:

I noticed not a sound
Save droppings of the jewels bright from trees
Upon the sodden ground,
And, still, sat breathing in the balmy breeze,
That fanned my burning brow,
When, glancing up, I saw a creature fair enow

For fairy land, I trow,—
As beauteous as the rosy-fingered dawn,
Or, yonder, bright rainbow,—
A slender, spotted, young and graceful fawn,
Which trotted long the road

As fearlessly as if thro' woodlands wide she strode:

I saw her lustrous eye,
As by my modest, cottage porch she passed,
And thought no star in the sky
More brilliant than the lovely light it cast,
When 'cross the way she went
And thro' a garden sweet with pale blush-roses'

I watched her disappear From sight behind a nodding, Norway spruce-tree tall:

scent:

I watched her, ah! in fear Lest she in hands unkind should, somehow, fall; But, never, to this day, Heard I that any evil met her on her way:

Deny it, he who will,
That there's a Power Protective in the air,
Which, e'er, on copse or hill,
Such timid creatures as this fawn, so fair,
Leads safely to their home,
Whene'er, by change, thre', paths of danger.

Whene'er, by chance, thro' paths of danger dark they roam!

MOTHER LOVE

'Twas a day in the middle of summer,
When the sky shone blue and bland
O'er the wide meadow lot where the sunshine
streamed hot
On the farmers' faces tanned:

And the brooklet, which slept in the rushes, Begged the mowers, grave or gay, Of its waters so sweet, in such vanquishing heat, To partake without delay;

But, the head of the house had provided
An abundant bev'rage bright,—
The strong drink which to men false strength lendeth, and, then,
Changes day for them to night:

Now, the farmer's loved son, stout and sturdy, Crowned with curls of chestnut hair, And an eye of the hue of brunellas, so blue, In the harvest field was there:

And the ghoul, which gushed out from the flagon, With fresh froth on lip and beard, At the lad looked and laughed, as the liquor he quaffed,

Till his eye grew dull and bleared;

And, ere long, o'er those eyeballs, so peerless, The flesh curtains fain would fall; And those feet, (once, so fleet,) in the now scorching heat, Scarce could bear their weight, at all;

Of the long, wooden rake, which he handled, He lost hold, against his will, Whilst the haycocks danced round on the closelycropped ground, At a locust's solo shrill; So, with steps, growing slow and unsteady,
With a flushed and fevered cheek,
To the homestead of white, in the bright, blinding
light.

Staggered he repose to seek:

As he lay on the lounge, quite unconscious,
In a slumber strangely deep,
With his curls damped with sweat, and his lips
stained and wet,

Crept his mother, there, to weep;

Not a word of complaint did she utter, As she looked upon her boy; But, her eyes became dim, as she gazed upon him Who was, once, her pride and joy;

Wiping off the great beads from his forehead, Pulling off, with gentle hand, Shoes and stockings, so soiled in the field where he'd toiled, By his side I saw her stand;

Then, she fondled him like to a baby,
And made easy ev'ry limb,—
This old woman, so gray, (full three score, if a
day.)

Who loved none so well as him;

Then, down-bending her head, bald and hoary,
On his feet a kiss she pressed,
With her soul in her eyes, when, to my deep surprise,
She to me these words addressed:—

"Yes, my son is a pitiful drunkard, Yet, I love him, spite his sin; Next to Christ I adore him we're standing before, Tho' he, never, Heaven may win!"

The boy's body, now, rests in the kirkyard, Where the daisies dream and nod, But, if mother prayers save, then, his soul from the grave

Must have soared to dwell with God!

What, my Friends, can be truer or tend'rer
Than such love in mother breasts,—
The affection no act of a child can contract,
But, which stands all searching tests?

Yea, when love's such as, sometimes, I've seen it,—
(Like the love of which I write,—)

Love, forgiving of all, tho' its idol may fall, It is sweet in Jesus's sight!

FAIRYLAND

When first I rose, this morning, And chamber curtains furled, Methought I woke in Wonderland, So changed was our old world:

The garden, lawn and meadow, The sidewalk and the street Were tucked 'neath ermine coverlets For gnomes or naiads meet:

House tops and tall church steeples Were tiled with pearly slate; O'er all was spread a counterpane Smooth, soft, immaculate:

Electric-wires were cables; Fence-posts like men appeared With ulster-collars turned up high O'er hoary hair and beard:

The trees, last night, so naked, Bore leafage wondrous fair; The birds were, still, in slumber-land; No sound broke stillness rare:

From chimneys, cased in crystal, Rose smoke in wreathing coils, And brownies lit their pussy pipes And rested from their toils:

But, now, the mystic quiet
Was spoiled by shovelers' spades;
Her cloak was stripped from Mother Earth
By snow-ploughs' fiery blades:

Her fleecy, spotless mantle
By hurrying hoofs was beat;
Her virgin robe was stamped and stained
By prints of human feet:

Alas! my world, so pure and white, Had lost her glamour rare; The mysticism, which round her lay, Had vanished into air!

ODE TO THE PEMIGEWASSET

I've two beloved friends, fair and faithful, But, many long years it may be Ere I list to the voice Of the first of my choice, Or, the face of the other see! And, there, in the North Land they waiteth;—
They waiteth and watcheth for me;
One a-singing so sweet,
As, with silvery feet,
He, fast, gambols along in glee:

The other I love just as dearly,
Tho' speechless is he and most grave;
For, he listens to hear
When my steps shall draw near
That a welcome he me may wave:

I spent, years ago, a vacation
Beside these dear comrades of mine,—
The blue mountain of pride,—
The clear stream at his side,
Kissed, at evening, by thirsty kine:

Each morning, the mountain, (who'd guarded My dreams thro' the past, darksome night,)
Threw off mantle of gloom,
Waving banner of brume,
With a smile on his visage bright:

The stream, which a lullaby chanted From dusk till the dawn of the day, Whispered, now, low and sweet, Words I tried to repeat, But, I failed; why I well can't say:

Dear Mountain, I see thee, at sunset, When a violet cope covers thee!— When the shades of night fall, And a hodden-gray pall Rises round thee from o'er the lea!

O Stream of the Pemigewasset, In autumn, a torrent so wild, But, whose gay prattle light, Ev'ry midsummer night, Sounds like cradle-songs sung to a child,

Dance along round thy agéd companion,
And sing him thy ditty most sweet
Till his nightcap of white
He puts on for the night,
And draws o'er him his snowflake sheet!

Then, sheathe, shining Stream, sword of silver,
And don thine ice armor, so strong,
And, at La Fayette's feet,
May thy slumber be sweet
Thro' the cold, winter months, so long!

But, when the first trill of the bluebird
Is heard upon weald or on wold,
Doff thine armor of night!
Draw thy sword, silver bright,
And, away, thro' the strath, Knight bold,

A-trolling thy lays and a-dancing
Along thy rough, rocky highway,
Laughing loudly in glee,
And a-waiting for me,
My bewitching Franconia Fay!

FREEDOM

Give me a home, tho' but a cot,
Where the brooklet weds the lake,
Upon the mountain's sturdy side,
Where, in spring, the windflowers wake,
With ne'er a friend but her I love,—
My devoted Mother true,
Whose hair's like snow, and eyes the tint
Of earth's canopy of blue!

And let me roam upon the hills
From the morn till dewy eve,
No carking care to gnaw my heart,
And no sorrow soul to grieve,
A song of gladness on my lip,
As I climb the rugged height,
My faithful spaniel at my heels
Like a page of errant knight!

A bed, at night, upon a heap
Of the purple heather fair;
My casements open wide to catch
Ev'ry whiff of bracing air;
And, then, away, where laugh the rills,
At the rosy dawn of day,
Perusing old Dame Nature's book,
Where the squirrels are at play!

I ask not wealth,—just means enough
To supply each daily need,
And health, (that best of heaven-sent gifts,)
With clear sight, for which I plead;
And, then, I know, when life is done,
Mother Earth a bed will grant,
And spread me o'er a mossy pall,
Whilst the birds will a death-song chant:

So, give to them who wish the gold, And a life in cities spent, Where hearts grow hard and health grows poor, And strong figures, bowed and bent! But, give to me a lifetime lived On the rock-ribbed mountain side! Oh, let me on his quartz-veined breast, Till I die, in peace abide!

SONG OF THE EGLANTINE

Let him, who will, admire
The Jacqueminot of fire!—
The rosebud white!
Give me the eglantine
Which grows where browse the kine!—
Whose cheeks are pink as thine,
Aurora bright!

Amid rough pastures bare, There, lives my bonny Fair, On thorny stem!— Thro' perfect days of June, And nights of silver moon, Beguiled by rills' soft rune, My priceless gem!

Oh, soon, may thee I meet, Thou witching wild-rose sweet, With blushing face! Amongst thy leaves' dark green, My modest, rural Queen, O'er rocky walls you lean In charming grace!

Then, when thy petals close, My soft, sweet-brier rose, Or drop to earth, When thy pure life is done, When thy short race is run, Breathe low a prayer to One Who gave thee birth!

He placed thee where thou art,
Thou undefiled, young heart;
And, Blossom wild,
Unseen by mortal eye,
Know, well, thy Maker's nigh!
He sees thee from on High!
Thou art His child!

Then, happy be, tho' none, Beside the breeze and sun, You visits pay! Yon pasture bars behind, Of calm, contented mind May you Our Father find, Each dawning day!

CRAZY MARY

(Dedicated to the late Mary ——, who became insane on the death of her intended.)

Over the rugged roadway, Facing the wintry blast, Braving the heat of summer, Back in the years long past,

Plodded poor crazy Mary, Seeking her lover true, Grief turning dark hair hoary, Dimming her eye's bright hue;—

Wondering why her sweetheart Kept not his loving tryst, While o'er her brain bedarkened, Daily, crept deepening mist:

Next, to her home returning, Teardrops them sprinkling o'er, Fingered she ev'ry garment Fashioned her hands, of yore;

Looking them sadly over,
Laying, with care, each by,
Keeping them for the bridal
Deemed she must, soon, be nigh:

Then, the next morn saw Mary Wending her weary way, Thoughts on intended husband Safe in the Realms of Day:

Now on the Hills of Glory, Close to the Crystal Flood, Mary, restored, clasps lover Healed in his Saviour's blood:

Once, God thought best to part them; Now, in His Love Supreme, There, in the Courts of Zion, There, live they out Love's Dream!

MARY'S LITTLE LAMB

From the hills and mountains rugged, Which the blue Pacific line, Came a train of sheep and cattle Down the wharf, one morning fine;

As the herdsman, with his collie,

Drove the sheep from cattle-cars, He discovered one lay dying On the floor, behind the bars;

And, beside her, a wee lambkin, (Only just a few days old,) Moaned for milk,—for sweet caresses, And for shelter from the cold;

Now the drover, thinking lambkin Without mother's milk would die, In his brawny arms it lifted, And, to billows rushing by

Was about to cast the creature When he felt a movement light; At his elbow stood a stranger, Pity softening visage bright;

"And it please thee," said the stranger,
"I will take the lamb, to-night,
To my darling, little daughter
Who'll be filled with deep delight!"

With a smile, the stalwart shepherd Laid the lambkin on his breast, And, that night, the tiny creature Went to be young Mary's guest:

Fed, by hand, with milk, the lambkin, Under Mary's loving care, Grew to be as fair a creature As you'd meet with, anywhere;

Not a fleece was seen more silky, From which eyes, so brown and bright, Looked with love upon its mistress, At whose side, from morn till night,

Full of life, it trod the meadows, Browsing tender leaf-buds rare, Or, in playful race, outran her, In those spring-like days, so fair:

Daisy loved sweet biscuits, dearly, And she knew the cupboard where Dearest, little Mistress Mary Kept the dainty, passing rare;

So, when hungry, to the closet She would trot with nimble feet, Paw the door, and, then, with vigor, "Bah! bah! bah!" she'd thrice repeat:

But, alas! too soon, an ending

Came to Mary's happiness, And the pet, she'd loved so fondly, Lapsed to deep forgetfulness;

Leaving, soon, the flowery country
For the busy, bustling town,
There was, here, no place for Daisy,
Used to rove o'er pastures brown;

So, in tears, unhappy Mary
Gave her pet to a playmate dear,
And, before again she saw her,
There had passed a fitful year;

But, at last, she paid a visit
To her playmate, and, behold!
Daisy's wool, now, swept the flooring
Of the dirty sheepfold old;

She, no longer, was a lambkin
With a coat clean, soft and white,
But, a ewe, with wool in tangles,
Blinking, there, in noonday's light;

And, to Mary's salutation
No loved, "Bah!" fell on her ear;
She no longer, knew the lassie
To whose heart she'd been so dear:

Years have passed since she was given To the butcher's bloody knife, But, her mistress, (now, a woman,) Often, dreams of early life

When she romped o'er heath and heather, In the gloaming's tender light, With the lamb her heels a-tagging Till the shadows brought the night.

MERITED PRAISE

(An incident of my Aunt's wedding)

The vows were said; the prayer was prayed, And ev'ry smiling guest, In festive costume fair arrayed, The new-wed pair addressed:

Each wished them joy and earthly wealth;
The parson, peace untold;
And all the bride wished perfect health
Above the shining gold:

Then, when the marriage feast was o'er, In groups of two or three, The guests the time remaining wore In conversation free: A-flitting round with words to say To each, (assembled, there,) I saw the lamplight, laughing, play On Father's silver hair:

How affable my handsome sire! How dignified, withal! How gleamed his bright, brown eye of fire! How straight he seemed! how tall!

'Twas then the rector, earnest, grave, Sought out my Mother's side; He took a seat, (she, gracious, gave,) Upon the sofa wide,

And said he'd come of one to speak Whom Mother loved right well, When crimson grew her modest cheek At what he had to tell;

My Father's beauty, (rarely found In one of fifty years,) He praised, besides his sense, so sound; His heart which knew no fears;

The kindly pastor, slowly, then, These parting words did say, "A King your husband is 'mong men!" Then, bowed and walked away:

Dear Friends, what comfort 'tis to us,— My Mother dear and me, To know that others prized him, thus!— His sterling traits did see!

And, since he crossed the Billowed Bar, I gaze at pictured face, And wonder in that Land Afar If Father's grown in grace!

I know that on his silver hair A Victor's Crown doth rest, And, on that face, (so wondrous fair,) The smile which God hath blessed!

PIQUE-BOIS-JAUNE

Fresh was the breath of morning,
After the starry night;
Clear was the springtime sunshine
Shedding its amber light
Over the budding chestnuts,
Over the hills of green;
But, clearer the notes of a joyous bird
That sang in yon oak, unseen!

"Wick! wick-up! wick-up! wick-up!" Gayly the bird did call. Up in his leafy covert, Up in his greenwood hall; While, on my spade a-leaning, Long, did I listen, there, But, never a sight of his bonnet bright Had I, that morning fair!

Often, since that mild morning, Thro' the old oak I've gazed, Where rang the song so thrilling Which so my soul amazed; But, saw I, ne'er, the singer;-Never, of him caught sight, Tho', dozens of times, trolled he out the call, From dawn till the fall of night!

Later, I missed the music Up in the oak, so green; Long, did I listen, sadly, Wond'ring what it could mean; Had the musician left us, Never, to, here, return? Had I proved a neighbor to him unkind, Unsocial or hard or stern?

So, passed the gladsome springtime, Full of its bird-songs sweet; So, passed the early summer Ever with flowers replete; Listing the thrush and hang-bird, Singing at dusk and dawn, I, now, hardly missed from the chorus, there, The lay I had heard, that morn!

But, as I sat, one evening, Dreaming beneath the trees, Trying to learn the language Sung by the cooling breeze, Up, to a pine, before me, Flew, in the sunset light, The rollicking bird of the happy spring, Decked out in his bonnet bright!

Whilst there he stood, alone; But, on me gazed, intently,-Gallant Sir Pique-Bois-Jaune! Just as if he had heard me Wish that I him could see,

Never a note he uttered.

And, now, that his nesting-cares, all, were o'er, He'd show himself, there, to me!

Always, shall I remember How in my face looked he, There, in the summer gloaming, Out from the tall pine-tree; Dark gleamed his natty neckcloth, High, o'er his spotted breast; And proud was the look which he cast at me, Ere, off, to his tree-trunk nest

Winged he his way on pinions Bright, underneath, as he Who to the west was wending, Slowly, his way, so free, Bringing the night refreshing, Restful to him and me; And, long, of the Flicker thought I, that night, I'd longed, all the spring, to see!

USE THE EYES WHICH GOD HATH GIVEN!

Ye Men of Wealth, whose gold can buy The things for which ye pine, I'll wager thee yon sunset sky Is mine far more than thine!

The kingcups, in the meadow low, The aster, by the rill, For thee as me as brightly blow Thine heart with joy to fill!

But, while I bide beside the brook To list its mystic rune, Upon the price of stocks you look, Forgetful of its tune!

I smile to see the foam which flecks The waves that wash the strand; You cringe to view the surge which wrecks Your ships that steer to land!

I joy, at dawn of day, to hear The phoebe's cheery note; You'd give a dozen ducats, clear, Would he but rest his throat,

Because for thee speeds night away In thought; but, at the dawn, You'd fall asleep till broad noon-day In gairishness be born!

You see in buttercups no gold;-No silver on the sea! Thy gold yon heavy coffers hold To bring you misery!

As long as lucre, Man, you love
With all your mind and might;
And, never, see the blue above,—
The red of sunset light;

As long as, Man, your eyes you close
To earthly beauties bright,
So long your life will be but prose,—
The kind we dullards write!

And, ne'er, you'll know what bliss were thine, If you'd but looked to see The silver in the flashing brine,— The gold in bloom and bee!

HAUNTED HEARTS

The parsonage was haunted
By the spirit of the dead;
'Twas not uncertain hearsay,
But, the village verdict dread;
Throughout the roomy mansion
Uncanny sights and sounds
Were seen and heard, each evening,
When the spectre went his rounds:

No man in all that country
Would have entered, here, at night,
Fôr fear he'd meet the parson
In his winding sheet of white;
But, four long months I tarried
In that dwelling's ancient walls,
And, ne'er, met sprite or goblin
In its spacious rooms or halls:

In the barn I, often, lingered,
Where, they said, once, heavy, hung
A cold and rigid body
With its stiff, protruding tongue;
But, on the evening breezes
There was borne no groan or cry;
No spectral face before me
Swung from dusty rafters high:

The whinny of the stallions,
(Standing haltered in the stalls,)
Their hoof-beats on the flooring
Loud re-echoed from the walls;
The cricket's chirp, so cheery,
Quite enlivened dusky gloom,
Assuring me this stable
Was no place of direful doom:

'Tis hearts, not homes, Belovéd, Which are haunted, (oh, 'tis true!) By spectres of the buried, Whom, when living, well they knew! Whom, while they trod Life's Roadway, E'en, as neighbors, side by side, They helped not up the hill-path Or across the torrent wide!

'Tis all the little favors
Which we do, as on we go,
That make of ev'ry fellow
A stanch friend and not a foe;
'Tis all the acts of kindness,
Which we'll wish, some time, we'd done,
When o'er are all our trials,
And the Heavenly Shores are won!

And, then, our hearts, (free fully From all shadows of remorse,) In darkened room, no groaning, E'er, will hear and see no corse; And bright will be the pictures, Which we see at dusk or dawn, The pictures of our Lost Ones Fair and lovely as the morn!

DEAR AUNT CAROLINE

Lone in her cot, 'neath the beech and the oak, Where thoughts of the past in her soul often woke, Long years ago, my old Aunt Caroline Lived many a month thro' the sweet summers fine:

Neat was her cottage as eyes ever saw, With queer patchwork quilts and each bare, painted floor;

None could excel her hot biscuits, so light, Rolled out on that pastry-board scoured snowywhite:

Nowhere could butter more golden be seen Than made by her hands, (brown and wrinkled, I ween;)

Nobody's welcome was heartier, e'er,
Than that 'neath the roof of this dame of white
hair:

Climbing a ladder to the top of the mow, She pulled deftly down fragrant hay for her cow; Sitting alone with her knitting, she spun Fair castles in Spain till the set of the sun:

Then, Auntie spied a slight form, lithe and free;— Two bare, sun-burned feet standing near to her knee;—

Two merry eyes into hers gazing down;—
Two arms, (round her neck,) as those feet just as brown:

After her young, best-loved grandchild had gone Away, 'cross the fields, to her home, till next morn, Happily, then, my dear, kindly, old Aunt To bed went with fears of no spectre to haunt:

Rising from dreams with the sun and the birds, (Awaiting her pet, as she pressed creamy curds,) Auntie, soon, saw, ('long the path, bare and worn, Which wound among junipers green,) the young fawn

Coming, again, to bid happy good-day To dear, crippled grandma, near the end of life's way:

Leaving her, soon, to her work and the thought Of those gone Before, whom each hour nearer brought:

Now, to Aunt Caroline's cot should you go, Your heart would be filled with regret and with woe,

For, from the door, where she smiled welcomes kind.

She passed like a puff from the low-breathing wind:

Happily, now, I believe, she must stand In yon, far-away, but, beloved Spirit Land, Patiently, doing the tasks, (yet, her part,) With joy on her brow, and with peace in her heart!

HER IDEA OF HAPPINESS

She craved neither gold, nor, yet, jewels; A mansion and lackeys she'd spurn; Society had no attraction For her whose heart deeply did yearn

For a cot on the slope of the mountain, Red ramblers abloom 'bout the door, The sun, glinting soft thro' the casements, Reflected on each painted floor;

While, fresh from the dew-laden clover Come odors refreshing and sweet, As bees fill their bags full of pollen, And hay-makers rest from the heat:

The pictures she sees are of nature,— Shy sheep far away on the hills; Wise shepherd dogs watching their movements Or driving them home o'er the rills:

The music she hears,—the lark's carol Or low of the meek, gentle kine,— Winds chanting thro' solemn cathedrals Of oak, maple, hemlock or pine: The day full of peace and contentment; The night undisturbed by a sound Save tinklings of bells in the sheepfold Or steps of the old hunter-hound:

No hurry or bustle or worry,
But, plenty of time to adore
The Maker of th' universe wondrous,—
O'er all of its beauties to pore;—

To sit on the porch, towards the sunset;—
To bask in the glorious light;—
To watch the fair, sky panorama
As breezes the clouds put to flight;—

Or, yet, when the hills lie in shadow, And stars faintly glow in the sky, To raise deepest thoughts to the Altar Of Him in the firmament high:

Perchance, you, my Readers, may, also, Delight in this kind of retreat; Perhaps, you may, too, see the traces Of messenger angels' light feet

In brooklet or bright, purple heather,—
In the depths of some clear, mountain lake,—
In shadows that play on the moorland,—
In storms which wild torrents awake:

For, there, in the fair fanes of Nature, In chapels of chestnut or fir, Dwells God who is, ev'ry day, worshipped By birds whose sweet songs our souls stir!

BENEDICITE

Friend, (whom, once, I thought to be Type of all the world holds best,) When the sunbeams sink to rest, Then, I think of thee, Murm'ring, "Benedicite!"

When to God I bend the knee, Ere to sleep I fall, at night, Or, at break of morning light, Then, I pray for thee, Mutt'ring, "Benedicite!"

Wonder I if, o'er the sea,
Thou a weary wand'rer art;
Or, in some huge city's heart
Should I think of thee,
Whisp'ring, "Benedicite!"

Then, these questions come to me,-

Wear her lips the smile they wore In those happy days of yore, When fast friends were we, Saying, "Benedicite?"

Can her heart as blithesome be
As in those departed days?
Hath she, still, those witching ways?—
Wondrous ways to me,
Praying, "Benedicite!"

Doth she, ever, think of me Ere the morning toil's begun?— When the daily tasks are done, Wishing me to see, Sighing, "Benedicite?"

Grant, dear Lord, ere passes she
To that Better Land Afar,
Ere she cross the Seething Bar,
I her lips may see
Murm'ring, "Friend, oh, bless thou me!"

SONG OF THE WATCH

Oh, take me from the casket, where I so long have lain;

Attach to me a ribbon in lieu of silver chain;
Oil up my works, so rusty, and find the old-time key
To set my wheels a-whirring, and, then, I'll sing to

thee!

My tarnished case of silver was, once, of brightest

When lay I in the pocket of waistcoat, deepest blue, Of him,—thy great, great Grandpa, (in seventeen seventy-six.)

Who looked at me, so proudly, and listened to my tick:

Of course, you know your Grandpa must know the time exact,

When out of Little Harbor his vessels slowly tacked;

How long, to one short second, his merchantmen were gone,

When they returned, well-laden, with barley, wheat or corn:

Old Captain Blunt, so sturdy, was short and stout and bald;

He did the right, and nothing his spirits, e'er, appalled;

I feel his heart fast beating, to-day, against my face; I feel his hand caressing my sterling silver case:

I feel the air, so biting, of that cold Christmas night, E'en now, my vitals piercing, as Grandpa gripped me tight;

I see the breeze a-blowing his wig, so long and gray; I see the ice-blocked river, as gloomy closed the day:

And, now, I see the Chieftain, great Gen'ral Washington.

Surrounded by his Staff bearing flag and pike and gun;

I note him take his place in a row-boat, small and frail;

His worried look I notice, as fiercely blows the gale:

He glanceth at the waters a-dashing madly by;

He glanceth at the snowflakes a-sifting from the sky; He glanceth at the ice-floes, which whirl adown the stream,

Then, falleth in a study,—a short, but, troubled dream:

Soon, raising chin from collar of cape that muffles him,

I see his gray eyes glimmer 'neath hat's three-cornered brim,

And hear his voice commanding when asking if there's one

Who knows the rushing river, down which the iceblocks run:

And, then, I hear the answer; 'tis, "Captain Blunt, who's here,

Knows well the driving current, and of it hath no fear!"

Then, his reply I notice, which, ne'er, shall I forget, "Please, take the helm, O Captain!" and, thus it was there met

The Leader of the Army and your dear Grandpa, there,

The eve of Trenton's Battle, upon the Delaware:

The Captain grasped the rudder, and, slowly, carefully,

The boat moved thro' the blackness, across the surging sea:

I heard the tramp of warriors who in their boats embark:

I saw, across the river, flash camp-fires in the dark;— The camp-fires of the Hessians, for, on this Christmas night,

They kept a royal revel, nor dreamed of foe or fight:

At last, we landed, softly, upon the Trenton side; In silence, marched our soldiers as smould'ring camp fires died; 'Twas four o'clock, and, sleeping, the hated Hessians lay

Before the dying embers, two hours ere break of day:

Before the foemen knew it, were they our sleepy prize,

Wrapped, head and ears, in blankets of good, nay, ample size,

While our poor, half-starved soldiers were blue with frost and cold.

For, scanty was the clothing above their bosoms bold:

All this I saw, in person, on that eventful night, From pocket of the waistcoat of broadcloth, blue and bright,

Of Captain Blunt, your Grandpa, who 'cross the

Rowed Washington, thro' danger, to victory most rare!

MINERS OF CORNWALL

Digging and drudging and delving In the mines of cold Cornwall, so bleak; Picking and boring and blasting For six long, weary days of the week;

Listening and wond'ring and shudd'ring At the roar of old ocean, o'erhead; Dreaming, yet, sweating and slaving For their wives' and their little ones' bread;

Fearing and trembling, yet, trusting In the pitiless, rough, savage sea; Hoping, imploring and praying That their loved ones afloat safe may be;

Kneeling, entreating and weeping
At the sound of the surf's thund'ring crash;
Weary, yet, watching and waiting
For the breakers to coasts cease to lash:

Such is the life of the miners
Seeking copper in far-off Land's End,—
Sturdy of frame, strong of courage,
With great hearts which to romance do tend;—

Offsprings of hardy, brave Britons Of the days of King Arthur of old, Who, with his paladins loyal, Put to rout the fierce, Saxon hosts bold;

Long as they peer thro' the caverns, Lying deep 'neath the sea's foaming flood, Hearing the voice of the tempest, Which quite freezes their hot, Celtic blood,

Thoughts of Sir Tristan will strengthen Their arms brawny and hearts true as steel; E'er, will Excalibur mighty Them defend with its strokes, sharp and leal!

Merlin will weave weird enchantments For their watchful and keen, wary eyes, Never, to close till the lantern In the mine's gloomy vault slowly dies!

A VALENTINE

One autumn day, when all the trees had shed Their countless leaves, which scattered lay and dead, I plucked from out my modest, little garth Two rose-buds red, that blushed beside the path,

For two dear Friends who came from miles away Towarm my heart, that cheerless, autumn day: One bud, still, lives, altho' three months have fled Since it I snatched from out the leaflets dead;—

Still, lives, a symbol, bright and wondrous fair, Of all th' affection I its owner bear;—
A love which, now, hath lasted many a year, But, yet, endures, sweet, sturdy and sincere,

As when, for sixteen years, close, side by side, We toiled together, comrades bona fide, With ne'er a word to mar the friendship sprung From out an incident, when we were young!

But, now, tho' hoar-frost sparkles in our hair, And Time hath furrowed foreheads, once, so fair, The Friendship, nourished in our breasts, so long, This wintry day, is bursting into song!

God grant, when twenty-seven years more pass by, Intact, within our bosoms twain may lie This Love as spotless as the Alpine snows, As fresh and fair as, "Sharon's dewy Rose!"

L'ENVOI

In verse, above, dear Isabel, You've found a valentine! Oh, may it please thy fancy, well,— This tale of, "Auld lang Syne!"

The above lines are dedicated to my Friend, Mrs. Bradbury P. Doe.

66

IN THE SPRINGTIME SWAMP

Deep in the swamp, that skirts the lake, Dearly, I love to stray, Soft, 'neath my feet, the curled-up brake Coaxed by the sun's warm ray:

Close by the birch,—(fair, forest bride,) Smiling, the pine doth tower, Seeming his sweetheart's head to hide, Fearful lest showers may lower:

Floating on boggy waters brown,
Brightly the cowslips shine,
Looking like gold in a priceless crown
Gemmed with the dewdrops fine:

Scores of anemones, by the rill,
(Modest, young nuns, at prayer,)
Open their leaves at the wind's sweet will,
Trembling to feel him, there:

Sometimes, the maple, overhead, Drops his bright blossoms fair Down on the windflower he would wed, Letting her know he's there;

But, not one word the tree doth dare, Ever, aloud to speak, Dreading those monks who always wear Hoods o'er their faces meek;

Never, they move from where they kneel, (Beads counting o'er and o'er,) E'en, when night's shadows o'er them steal, Bidding them pray no more;

Yet, in the early hour of prime, When thro' the woods doth ring Merry tree-sparrows' tinkling chime, Aves they, then, do sing:

Little Skunk-cabbage Priests, in brown, (Deemed by the tree, austere,)
Ne'er need he dread your harmless frown,
Wishing you weren't right here!

Clad in your mottled cowl and cope, Never, you cease to pray! Here, on the moss-grown ground, I hope Ye I shall find, alway!

LEGEND OF THE PASSION PLANT

As I bend a listening ear O'er my lovely Passion Plant, This is what I seem to hear In low notes of peaceful chant;—

"I was born the day the Lord On the cruel Cross met death, And, in terror, high I soared Fain to catch His dying breath:

"As I gazed on dreadful pain Marked upon His marble brow, Cordate leaves were cleft in twain; Thus, you three-lobed see them, now:

"As, by tendrils, climbed I high "Pon the Cross, its image gray Was reflected in mine eye; There you find it to this day:

"And, as I caressed His side,
(From which purple drops flowed fast,)
Ev'ry petal white was dyed
With their color, long to last:

"When I saw the Thorny Crown Piercing Christ's pale forehead fair, Lo! my stamens, straight and brown, At that instant, (passing rare,)

"To a golden halo bright
All were changed, and, since that time,
When I ope to dawning's light,
There, you see the Crown Sublime:

"Not in sorrow, shame or fear, Low, I hang my heavy head, But, in joy, I Christ was near, On that gloomy morning dread:

"As I saw the Face Divine
For but just a second's space,
So, glance, quickly, upon mine!
Long, may you not see my face!

"For, my purple petals open,
Only once, and, then, at morn,—
Ope, in sweet and loving token,
Calv'ry's Cross did I adorn!"

BUNNY

Right after ev'ry snowstorm, In hilly Sharon, here, While yet the snow lay sparkling Beneath the pine-trees darkling, I've watched my Mother peer From out her curtained casement
To see if she could find
The track of any rabbit,
('Twas but a harmless habit,)
Upon the snow outlined;

And, oft, was she rewarded
By spying, here and there,
The pretty footprints, plainly;
But, her, who made them, vainly,
She looked for, ev'rywhere:

Yet, still, she searched, a-trusting A rabbit should she see Upon the crust a-leaping, While loud the blast blew, sweeping Thro' pine and cedar-tree:

But, now, the summer's with us;— The blade instead of snow; While bees are making honey, My Mother seeks for Bunny Upon the slope, below:

Beside the window, yonder, She lounged, last Monday night, A-resting from her duties, Admiring Nature's beauties Spread out before her sight;

And, I, who sat beside her,
Heard, soon, a smothered cry,
As Mother seized my shoulder,
When, I, becoming bolder,
Leaped up her rocker by:

Upon the gravelled pathway
There crouched, a foot away,
Who could it be but Bunny,
With pointed ears, so funny,
And fur of brownish gray?

She'd come, at last, (God bless her!)
My Mother's heart to cheer!
And, then, as died the gloaming,
For forage went she roaming
Thro' leafy coverts, near!

Dear Bunny, come, I pray thee, To visit us, again! We'll serve thee corn and cabbage That you may, never, ravage The garden-plots of men!

And, when creeps on the autumn, And huntsmen stalk thy way, Oh, in thy burrow hide thee, And, there, in safety, bide thee Till fades the light of day!

For, since my Mother's found thee, Her tender heart would bleed If she should find thee wounded, (Where, once, you gaily bounded,) Upon the meadow-mead!

And we shall seek, at nightfall,
To see thee in this place!—
To watch thine ears a-listening,—
Thy deep, dark eyes a-glistening,
A-lighting up thy face!

MAY

Thy tardy footsteps hasten, Oh, merry month of May! Us mortals do not chasten By any long delay!

We love you for two reasons; And we will tell you why Of all the charming seasons We value you so high!—

Because the springtime flowers, In dale and dreamy dell, (Bedewed by April showers,) You make to blossom well!

And, too, because you send us The feathered songsters fleet Who far more pleasure lend us, Perhaps, than posies sweet!

We'll cull, in joy, the flowers In field and forest set! We'll search all secret bowers For the birdfoot violet!

Bright birds will, then, be winging Their way to you and me; There'll, ev'ry day, be ringing Sweet love-songs from the tree:

We'll see the redwings feeding On new-sown fields in flocks, And we'll not be unheeding Of that quaint bed which rocks,

In yonder orchard blooming, Upon a mossy limb, The apple-blooms perfuming The air for us and him,— (His wedding waistcoat wearing Of black and orange bright,) Who, to the cradle faring, Flits, (morning, noon and night,)

An insect her (in yellow
And green,) to place before;
Ah! He's a gallant fellow,—
This wee Lord Baltimore!

So, bring, with weather warmer, Dear May, bright bloom and bird! Let's see, right soon, the former! The latter let be heard!

And, when you come in gladness, All Nature'll laugh in glee! There'll be no room for sadness! We all shall happy be!

I KNOW A BANK

I know a bank that, each fall, is blue
With the aster's azure eye,—
Where the grass is heavy with gleaming dew,
As I pass, each morn, it by;

The asters lean towards the meadow brook, Which stalks on, with pride most sure, Thro' its oozy banks, casting ne'er a look At the asters, sweet and pure:

A friend most true have the asters fair, Who stands high upon a ridge, Stretching out his arms, as he waiteth, there, 'Bove the brooklet's rustic bridge;

This loyal friend is an apple-tree, All misshapen by birth and years, But, he loves the flowers blooming near his knee, That, at dawn, are bathed in tears;

At noon, when sunshine streams strong and hot, He spreads out a screen of green, Scatt'ring down his sweet, juicy fruit to dot The low bank where th' asters lean;

Yet, ne'er a glance do the flowerets cast At their faithful friend, so bent, Who would shield them all from the autumn blast, Which, for years, his form hath rent:

But, th' asters look, with a longing eye, From the dawn till daylight fails, At the brook that's bright 'neath the noonday sky, Tho' in twilight's haze he pales;—

Who grows a monster, at rise of rain, And leaps on with rush and roar,— A huge lion fierce, with a wind-tossed mane, All devouring him before:

And, whilst the streamlet fares on in scorn, Looking not to left or right, The old apple-tree on the blooms forlorn Sweetly smiles from morn till night:

Oh, silly blossoms, why is 't that you Are so blind as not to see When a comrade's false, and when one is true, Like the gnarled, old apple-tree?

WHY A SAILOR BEN BECAME

Long ago, in days departed, Rumor knew a youth true-hearted, The young son and heir of one of wealth and pride; And his father loved him well, Tho', the strange, sad truth to tell, He loved money more than him his hearth beside!

Now, it chanced the laddie, Ben, Met, one day, a damsel, when To that lass went out the love of his great soul; So, when he'd his suit declared, And found she his feelings shared, To his sire went he to tell his purpose whole:

When the hard, old man, alas!
Heard what things had come to pass,
He refused to sanction marriage with the maid,
And, in threats and argument
The whole evening long was spent;
But, they neither one bold Ben's intention stayed:

So, at last, the wily man
Hit upon a little plan,
Which, next morn, he to his stubborn son made
known;
Lusty lad should go to sea;
And, on his return, if he,
Still, the lady loved, his sire'd the act condone:

After bidding her farewell,—
(Her, who made Ben's heart to swell,)
The lithe laddie to the ship repaired, elate;
And long weeks and months passed by,
But, with Hope, (Love's Anchor,) nigh,
Thro' the time with calm contentment Ben did wait:

In a European town,
For the girl with braids of brown
Purchased Ben a watch of dainty workmanship,
And a gown of silken sheen
For the maid, tho' poor, a queen
In the eyes of him of dark and downy lip:

After many months, at last,
At the wharf the brig made fast;
And, young Ben, attired in sailor costume blue,
Toward the manor house made way,
With a bosom light and gay,
To the lass he loved, still, faithful, stanch and true:

Greeting, first, his agéd sire,
Ben, with fervor, did inquire
For the lass he left behind him, when he sailed;
When, his father, calmly, said
That the lassie'd, long, been dead,—
That she, after his departure, slowly failed:

Then, Ben's merry eye of blue Changed to one of blackest hue, And his downy, laughing lip grew set and white; Pallid grew his cheek of tan, And, a boy, no more, but, man, In appearance and at heart, grew he, that night:

On the embers, (burning bright In the grate with brass bedight,) Threw he watch and silken stuff, so white and fair; When to ashes they had burned, To his sire the sailor turned, Cursing him, in tones of fary and despair:

Catching up his cap of blue, Rushed he out, 'mid falling dew,
To the streets deserted, pacing them, all night;
But, when morning mists of gray
Ushered in the gloomy day,
Far from home, they found him, weak and wan and white:

In the village churchyard green, By the sexton, he was seen A long, last farewell a-taking from his own, Who, beneath the turf asleep, Must have felt his sorrow deep, As he wept as only men to weep are known:

When the shining sun arose
On the world and on his woes,
To a dram-shop slowly sauntered weary Ben,
In the sparkling wine so red
Trying, hard, to ease his head
And forget the saddest, then, was he of men:

But, with buzzing brain, and feet He could guide not, this retreat Of profanity and vice he left, at last; And the captain of the ship Ben, anon, saw near the slip, Begging leave to serve as seaman at the mast:

On Ben's brow, (late, beaming bright,)
Now, sat ghosts of gloomy night;
In his bosom lay the image of the maid
He had planned to make his wife,
And whose smile, throughout his life,
From a self-destruction dire the laddie stayed:

Hard and horny grew the hands
Of the heir of gold and lands;
Bowed and bent with pain and toil became the form
Of the man, who, when a boy,
For all time, lost life's best joy
In the person of a lass with heart most warm:

On Ben's wrinkled face no tears By his messmates' searching eyes were ever seen, Save, when, (ev'ry voyage o'er,) Each glad sailor went ashore

As dragged, painfully, the years,

On a wife's or sweetheart's bosom true to lean:

It was then, most sad, that Ben
To some dreadful, drinking den
Made his way to drown the demon in his breast;
Then, each hard-earned penny gone,
To the vessel, pale and wan,
He would stagger back to slumber and to rest:

Yet, all those, who shipped with him, Saw his faded eye grow dim And a sad, sweet smile play round his mouth weeddyed,

As, with woman's tenderness,
All those sick or in distress
He to succor stood their swaying bunks beside:

Many years have fled away
Since old Ben, (bald, bent and gray,)
On his final voyage sailed, at gloaming's glow,—
A short voyage, at whose end,
(We all hope,) he met the friend,—
The lost lassie of the days of long ago!

THE GREAT STONE FACE

There hangs high on a wall of my bedroom A fine portrait which fills me with awe, As, on features gigantic, majestic, And expression, so sphinx-like, I pore: It conveys me, in thought, to the mountains Which in lovely Franconia rise, With their sides clothed in verdure eternal, Oh, so green 'neath the blue of the skies!—

To a spot in the heart of this region Which I saw, years ago, the first time, On a morn when the herbage was gleaming With the rays of the sun on the rime:

As I stepped from the coach, that had brought me From famed Bethlehem's Village so neat, I was told to look up at the visage Which the eyes of all tourists doth greet;

I obeyed, and, as, promptly, my eyelids
Were upturned to this sight, long desired,
There thrilled fast thro' my frame quick pulsations,
And with wonder my soul was inspired;

Right before me, arose, in lone grandeur, A tall Titan, with forest-clad breast, Whose grim face, with thin mists round it floating, Did not deign to e'en glance at his guest,

But, continued to gaze forward, onward, As it has many thousands of years, The horizon afar, always, scanning,— This huge profile which, ever, appears

To be, constantly, watching and waiting;— But, for what man has, never, been told; Yet, his vigil, so lonely and tireless, He has kept for long centuries old:

Him, no doubt, the brave redskins did visit
To implore full success to their arms,
On the eve of excursions of bloodshed,
When this image they worshipped with charms:

There, enthroned 'mongst the clouds, he's paid homage
By admirers, who, all, him request

To divulge hidden secrets of bosom, But, no heed doth he pay the behest:

Oh, inscrutable Countenance stony,
What strange prophecies thou could'st proclaim,
If thy lips, tightly sealed, could but open,
When, in prayer, pigmies call on thy name!

Ah! indeed! thy stern face, so relentless, Shall, forever, entreaties despise, But, shall guard the fair valley, so peaceful, Until new generations arise!— Till the face of the lake called, "Thy Wash-bowl," (Which lies cuddled so close to thy feet,) Shall be curled by the oars of great galleys Of gaunt giants,—thy progeny sweet!

So, till then, round thee birds shall skim gayly, Fleecy cloudlets entwining thy neck, Whilst thine eye shall pierce, still, the thin vapor, As festoons of rare vines thy form deck!

Travellers, all, who the "Old Man of Mountain," Ev'ry summer, by millions, do throng, May the sight of his mist-shrouded figure Fill your souls with thanksgiving and song!

If ye see him by sunlight or shadow,
Under skies of deep sapphire, so clear,
Or, when vale by a fog is pervaded,
When his face from a cloud-wreath doth peer,

May this Sentinel, patient and faithful, To your hearts make a fervent appeal! May he lift ye to thoughts more ennobling! May he make ye exalted to feel!

HYMN

I love to steal away, alone,
When sick are heart and brain,
To One to whom each need is known,—
Who lists no prayer in vain:

And, tho' the answer to my plea
May come in stranger guise,
I must not discontented be,
Nor mourn His judgment wise!

For, surely, in the after years, In nearer, clearer view, The change, (I, now, bewail in tears,) I'll see with vision new!

So, in the gloaming, calm and fair,
I pray for strength and peace,—
The strength which bears with cumb'ring care,
And peace that, ne'er, shall cease!

MORNINGS IN NEWMARKET, LONG AGO

Full sixty steps from yon highroad, Stood, long ago, a dwelling,— (A broad, old-fashioned, quaint abode Of which I you am telling,) With clean, box-bordered path before The hospitable-looking door:

Three strong, stone steps, (wide, low and neat,)
The bordered pathway ending,
Gave access to the village street
Between rock walls a-trending
Around the lawn of emerald dye,—
A pretty sight to passers-by:

Here, Auntie Treadwell dwelt for years, Good Sarah with her biding; Her other children, it appears, In other towns residing, Among them, one, the youngest boy, Her heart's delight and bosom's joy;

But, each vacation, home he came,—
This son and loving brother,
And, on one trip, two parrots tame
He brought his agéd mother;
And chatty were these fondlings green,
The gayest pair that, e'er, was seen:

Hard by the girdling, granite wall There stood a cedar tap'ring, And, in its branches, thick and tall, In summer weather, cap'ring, The parrots climbed till smooth and stark Were bole and branch, devoid of bark;

And on the steps, of which I speak, A child was, often, sitting A-watching them, with claw and beak, Up, thro' the tree a-flitting And scolding to each other, there, Upon the branches scratched and bare:

Now, sev'ral times a week, there passed, En route to far-off Brighton, Whole herds of cattle, hurrying fast, Enough most birds to frighten; But, in the clouds of dust they raised The parrots perched, all unamazed;

And, oft, the driver, in the rear,
A-plodding on, so weary,
Was much surprised to plainly hear,
"Hi! there!" in accents cheery,
And, stopping short, he'd turn around
And scan the sky, the house, the ground;

But, seeing no one save the maid, Who on the steps did hover, He hurried on nor longer stayed
The speaker to discover,
Tho' on his lip a look of scorn
Was born, that charming, summer morn:

And, when the dew adorned the grass,
Those pleasant mornings, early,
A flock of sheep was wont to pass,
Urged on by shepherds surly,
Who swore to hear but not to see
Those mocking parrots in the tree:

Those summer mornings, fresh and fair, Still, dawn with radiant splendor; But, that old homestead, now, is bare Of both its inmates tender,— Aunt Treadwell and her daughter good Who've joined the spirit sisterhood;

And, he, the son, (who used to play Upon his flute, so sweetly,)
He, too, hath wandered far away;
All, all are gone completely
Save her,—the graceful, little girl
With chestnut hair in many a curl,

Who sat upon the steps to see
The flocks and herds pass slowly;
Who, sometimes, smiled, in girlish glee,
To see the herdsmen lowly
So angry at the ringing call
From out the cedar, green and tall;

Upon her knee the patchwork square, She tried her mirth to smother; And, here, to-day, upon her chair She sits,—my gentle Mother, With sewing of another kind To occupy her active mind;

But, still, she loves to tell, to-day, As darns she some old stocking, The story of her girlhood gay And of those parrots mocking, Who, 'mongst the cedar branches green, Called out to passers-by, unseen!

I KNOW A PLEASANT, SUNNY, PINE-GROVE BORDER

I know a pleasant, sunny, pine-grove border With just a scrap of sky, o'erhead; And. near at hand, a chestnut-wood, as warder, Keeps vigil o'er a flower-bed:

No bed is this with straight and even edges,

Well-weeded, smooth, from pebbles free, Like those in "Merry England," near which hedges, In spring, are bright with bloom and bee:

This flower-bed by man hath, ne'er, been weeded; 'Tis strewn with leaflets dry and sere; By human hands it's never, e'en, been seeded,

And, yet, from out the soil doth rear

As pure and beautiful a blossom tiny As ever mortal eye did see; And, there, in early May, its petals shiny Unfolds for me in joy and glee:

The pine's brown needles closely press around her Lest careless feet on her should tread; And, brushing back last summer's leaves, I found her

Down-drooping low her modest head:

Her eyes, (as blue as summer skies, at morning,)
With drops of dazzling dew were wet,
A dress, (which matched her eyes,) adorning
This beauteous Birdfoot Violet:

With none but birds and squirrels within hearing, She blooms her best, each May-time day, Her winsome ways and purest breath endearing Herself to all who pass that way:

But, few there are who go this way, so wooded, So, few have found the bloom's abode; And, thus it is this sunny spot, sky hooded, I see with her blue blossoms strewed:

Far, far beyond the restless, rolling ocean, Dwells one, once, Queen of England old; And, she, (I've, always, had a deep-set notion,) Is like this flower with heart of gold:

Consoling words, Queen Mother, I can't offer, For, words, sometimes, sound hard and cold! But, these bright blooms, (your prototype,) I proffer:

Forgive me, if I seem too bold!

Oh, hold them, for one moment, in your fingers! Their faint, sweet perfume, once, inhale, If any in their graceful petals lingers, When taken from their paper jail!

And, then, when you have cast them off, forever, Of this, dear Queen, oh, mindful be!—
The sender loves you well, and doth endeavor, Thro' them, to show her sympathy!

(The above lines were sent to the Sweet Queen Mother Alexandra, after King Edward's Death.)

SAVED FROM THE SEA

A ship the sea was skimming like a bird;
No welcome zephyrs stirred
The azure ocean bright;
The torrid sun wide-flung his amber light,
And, overhead, sailed sea-gulls, snowy white,
Loud uttering a cry,—

A warning note, it seemed, sent down from realms on high:

Twelve miles from Acapulco she had made, And, 'neath an awning's shade, Each tourist bared his head, And wished 'twere time the sun, so hot and red, Had sunk to slumber in his sapphire bed; When, suddenly, a sound Woke ev'ry man and maid from revery profound:

"Fire! fire!' the knell re-echoed loud and clear; And all grew white with fear; Some swooned; some knelt in prayer; From some, shrill screams of terror rent the air; The hose was dragged, in haste, 'cross deck-floor

As, from the wheel-house side,
"Quick! wet the powder, there!" the frightened
Captain cried:

Some benzine, in the hold, was all ablaze; And, on their crookéd ways, The fiery streamlets went Amongst the merchandise, so densely pent, Until the smoke, not finding other vent, Up yawning hatchway rose, Enfolding in its coils all lookers-on,—its foes:

Amid the stifling smoke a sailor bold
Was lowered in the hold;
A hose within his hand,
He flung the crystal flood, while each deck-hand
Worked hard the pumps, at thought of far-off land
He, nevermore, might see,—
Of wife who watched, in tears, with baby at her

The Mate,—a Scotchman, red of hair and beard, (Whom ev'ry seaman feared,)
On deck stood calm and still,
In patience, waiting, like a statue, till
The fire was out,—the hold began to fill,

When, "Stop! enough!" was word The tourists terrified, and sailors, likewise, heard:

knee:

The frenzied deck-hands heeded not the mate,
Who did not hesitate,
But, pulled from breeches white
A pistol, as he called to those in sight,
"Cease, now, unless you love this firearm's light!"

He stopped a second more, But, still, the foaming flood in billows bright did pour:

A blinding flash! the bullet sped, and, lo!
The deck-hands, down below,
(Half-dazed with fear and smoke,)
Now, found their master's word was not a joke,
For, lodged in hose was ball; the Mate's fell stroke
The pumpers' brains had missed;

God help them! they'd no strength to any more resist!

The benzine barrel, then, was hoisted high;
And cheers rent cloudless sky,
As, on the taffrail strong
It lay one second; then, was whirled along
The frothing wake which sang its soothing song
To Captain, crew and Mate,
Who felt his startling act had been, almost, too late:

When passed the sturdy ship the Golden Gate, 'Twas not in regal state;
She fired no sweet salute,
For, wet were magazines; so, meek and mute,
She steamed along her happy, homeward route,
Content she lived to near
Her own, her native land, to her, now, doubly dear:

This story is a true, not, fairy tale;
And, never, will you fail,
(Should, Friends, you visit me,)
One passenger of that old ship to see,—
Your humble servant, who, (then, agéd three,)
Was saved from shipwreck dire
By One the seamen nerved to quench that fearful
fire!

THE WITCH OF VESUVIUS

A short walk from the rim of the crater Of Vesuvius, rugged and bold, Dwells a Witch than whom none is deemed greater In the prophecies true she's foretold:

All alone, liveth she on the mountain,
No live being about her abode
Save some inmate of fissure or fountain,—
The sly fox, viper vile, warty toad:

'Neath her eye, lovely Naples lies sleeping

By its beautiful harbor of blue; Silver streams, far below, flow a-leaping Down the valleys of emerald hue:

If the day's clear and bright, she goes roaming, After rootlets and herbs, down the steep; When the sun sets in state, at the gloaming, To her cavern she hies her to sleep:

The fierce fires in the crater a-seething Is the music she loveth to hear; From her mattress of moss, her hard breathing Shows of them the old witch hath no fear;

In a cauldron she steeps, long but slowly, The strong herbs, (she hath simpled, in pride,) Which she sells to the love-lorn lads lowly Who in her and her potions confide:

For the luckless, the love-sick, the weary She these philters, alone, doth prepare In her den, dirty, darksome and dreary, Whence her eye seems to fitfully glare:

Perchance, crooning her weird incantations
O'er the draughts she, with skill, doth distill,
The new moon spies her strange preparations,
As she peeks at her over the hill:

Oft, the tourist her palm with gold crosses That his future the hag shall foretell; And, in truth, 'mongst the lichens and mosses, Old Andromache prophesies well:

This old woman, (with lean, claw-like fingers,)
Brown and wrinkled, and motley arrayed,
At the time of an earthquake, long lingers,
By the sulphurous smoke undismayed;

But, the moment has been, (impelled, truly, By her instinct, so wondrous and clear,) When she hurried, in haste, not unduly, From the home which to her is so dear;

Yet, as soon as the mountain ceased rumbling, Pouring out o'er its breast lava hot, The old crone, with her gestures and mumbling, Glad, returned to her bare, rocky cot:

It so happened a serpent, she'd petted,
In one quake, by a stone was struck dead,
As, thro' smoke, steam and gases most fetid,
Down the path of the mountain she fled:

Grayer grow her lank locks, and more horrid The hag's features become, as years fly, 'Neath the winds, dews and damps, and suns torrid Of fair Italy's radiant sky:

None, on earth, know the reason, deep-hidden, Why she loves, here, to live, all alone; But, one day, she from here shall be bidden, When her life's secret strange shall be known!

ODE TO THE WINDS

Blow, gently, Western Breezes, blow
From off the Central Plain,
And tell me all I fain would know
About those fields of grain,—
Those boundless fields, so bright and gay,
O'er which, at will, ye sweep!—
Upon whose breast the gadflies play
And lively locusts leap!

Thou Northern Wind, with shrilly blast,
From realms of frost, oh, haste!
I know the icy floes you've passed!—
Each white and blinding waste
Where Borealis glistens bright
The Eskimo to cheer
And light him thro' that endless night,—
The winter solstice drear!

Bleak Eastern Blast, so keen and bold,
. Thy famous sandals gird,
(Like wingéd Mercury, of old,)
And, like an ocean bird,
Skim o'er the heaving, sobbing sea,
At sultry day's decline,
And, fresh and sweet, oh, bring to me
The odor of the brine!

Breathe, softly, Southern zephyrs, breathe, (From flowery llanos fair,)
Of signoritas shy who wreathe
Gay garlands for their hair!—
Of herdsmen, in sombreros wide,
The long lasso who fling,
As o'er the grassy plains they ride
And of their sweethearts sing!

Ye Brothers bright, (brisk, bold or bland,)
Ye Spirits, fierce or fair,
The wondrous sights of ev'ry land
To me, I pray you, bear,
That I, in rhymes, (maybe, uncouth,)
At twilight hour, may tell
My Friends,—the agéd and the youth,
All you remember, well!

Ye Winds, had I but wealth enow,

A traveller I would be!
I'd turn the vessel's pennate prow
O'er ev'ry shining sea!
But, Fate decrees that I shall stay
To write my rhymes, at home;
So, since ye come from far away,
Where happy idlers roam,

Oh, whisper in my listening ear,
(When darkness woos the day,)
And I will write the tales I hear,—
All, all, dear Winds, ye say!
For, all ye lisp I understand;
Yes, not a word, Winds free,
That ye shall speak of any land
Shall, e'er, be lost on me!

LOOK AND LEARN!

Clear are the stars in the welkin wide,
Standing so still at fair Dian's side;
Nought they despond,
Tho' no eye fond
Looks, in delight, to where they abide:
Oh, froward hearts, that crave to be seen,
Look and learn from the stars round Night's Queen!

Fair are the flowers on the mountain bare,
Drinking the dew and the fresh, pure air,
Nothing aghast
Tho' storms them blast,
Or travellers bold from the rocks them tear:
Oh, moping men, who curse and complain,
Look and learn from these blooms' silent pain!

Gay are the birds in the forest dim,
Singing sweet songs as they grasp the limb;
Ne'er, they regret
That no ear, yet,
Hath heard, in wonder, their greenwood hymn:
Oh, selfish souls, which long to be heard,
Look and learn from the meek, forest bird!

DEATH OF SPARTACUS

On, march the serried legions Roman!
Bright shine their brazen shields!
"Onward, to death!" thinks ev'ry bowman,
Whilst he his weapon wields:—

On, thro' Calabrian pines, sweet-smelling, On, towards the sounding sea Which shall a requiem, soon, be knelling Over the bond and free!

First, file the youth, in life's fair flower;

Next, those in manhood's prime; Lastly, the vet'rans upward tower, Marked by old Father Time:

Whom is't to meet these men are going, (Young, middle-aged and old,) Past grassy fields, where kine are lowing, Over the highway bold?

Him, once, a happy, Thracian shepherd, Up on the mountain side, Wearing the skin of a spotted leopard Flung o'er his shoulders wide;—

Over the hills his way a-wending, Wading the babbling brook, Guarding his flock from wolves offending With but a staff or crook;—

Him, one day, seized by captors truckling,— Torn from his highland home,— Torn from his tiny lambkins suckling,— Made a sad slave of Rome;—

Him, whose soft heart was ever beating But for his charges white, Listening to ev'ry feeble bleating, Rome had, since, taught to fight!—

Trained as a gladiator fearless, Men and beasts, both, to slay, This is the man these legions peerless Fear in their hearts, today!

Soon, to the sound of bugles blaring, Meet they upon the plain, Disciplined legions, armor wearing, Shooting their darts like rain;

Outcasts and slaves,—the other army, (Only half drilled for fight,) There, in Calabrian breezes balmy Wooing the wildflowers bright:

With such a mob of men invested, (Armed in what way they can,) Spartacus, stately, tall, broad-breasted, Stands in the bristling van!

Stouter and stauncher seems his shoulder; Bloodsthirsty, now, the look Worn on the face of him grown bolder Since bore he brand for crook!

Buckler of leather bears he lightly, Shielding his body strong, Sword of sharp steel a-gleaming brightly, As, bounding swift along,

Deals he smart blows among his foemen, Stretching them on the plain, Till round about lie heaps of bowmen Spartacus, sole, hath slain!

Closer they press around the giant; Nearer, and still more near, Wearing their cuirasses, so pliant, Over their hearts of fear,

Till, in a moment most unlucky, Struck, from the rear, in the leg, He, (the rough, rebel chieftain plucky,) Sinks on his knees; to beg?

Not for the world! But, death-strokes dealing, There, on the ground so bare, Spartacus fights while trumpets, pealing, Rends the soft, summer air!

Now, one wound more is slowly bleeding;— One in his bosom brave, Yet, fights he on, these cuts unheeding, He, but a wretched slave!

After a time, o'erpowered by numbers, Spartacus drops his glaive; There, on a pile of dead he slumbers,— There, where Rome's eagles wave!

Stains of a bright and vivid scarlet, (Hue only kings may wear,) Cover the corse of the sleeping varlet E'en to his fingers bare!

Tear them from him? Can they? Ah, never! Nobly he wears them, too! Slave, now, no more, but, free, forever, Under day's dome of blue!

DEAR PURPLE ASTERS RARE

When sunshine soft streams down
From clear, September skies,
And paints the meadows, (turning brown,)
With tints of azure dyes,
To terraced banks and braes I turn,
(Beyond the dusty town,)
Or, by the burn,
O'ergrown with fern,
When sunshine soft streams down:

Some clear, September noon,
(Like monk in hodden-gray,)
To list the sleepy rill's sweet rune
I love, alone, to stray;
And Nature's Book to read I dare,
(My missal,) to its tune,
Whose letters fair
Are asters rare,
Each clear, September noon:

These bright, September days,
(More rare than days of June,)
I tread these unfrequented ways
With God to be in tune;
And cull the asters, blue and white,
While scream the jabb'ring jays;
Oh, what a sight
For wand'ring wight,
These bright, September days!

'Pon tops of stemlets tall
They peer in my old face,
And seem to say, ''Now, comes the fall!
Soon, run shall be our race!
Oh, pluck us for the sad and lone!
Oh, deck the mansion hall,
Ere, with a moan,
We sink from throne
'Pon tops of stemlets tall!''

Dear purple asters rare,
Your royal robe ye spread,
When, not for you, would be quite bare
The meadow brooklet's bed!
So, bide with us, ye blossoms bold,
(The hue of welkin fair,)
Till days of cold
Do all enfold,
Dear Purple Asters rare!

SONG OF THE WOOING FROGS

When come the clement nights of spring, And Luna bright is beaming, I hear the wooing bull-frogs sing, (With which the swamps are teeming,) And fall asleep while yet their song Is borne the balmy breeze along:

The warm, spring weather stirs to life
These fellows, soundly sleeping,
And bids each one to seek a wife
Among the mass a-peeping
Amid the mud, the pond below,
Where dreamed they all while swirled the snow:

I love to list these courting frogs,—
These golden-coated gallants
A-tilting on the floating logs
And keeping, well, their balance,
While thro' my open casements, clear,
Is borne their notes upon mine ear:

Their voices all are pitched to blend So pleasantly together Would I their wooing, ne'er, would end, But, last thro' ev'ry weather, As well as she who knows the note Emitted from her lover's throat:

Their leaping feats we, all, have seen;—
Their eyeballs, bright and gleaming;—
Their jackets tight of brown and green,
Without a stitch of seaming;
But, few, I fear, their song hath heard
As clear as that of many a bird:

The rain harms not the dappled coat,
But, makes it shine more brightly;
They seem on muggy showers to dote,—
These portly suitors sprightly,
As, patiently, they wait their prey,
A-squatting on the wat'ry way:

How dive they in the pool, so dark, If think they danger's nearing, With widening circles left to mark The place of disappearing!—These nimble-leggéd, agile frogs Who sing of love from floating logs!

Yes, clear's the song the bull-frogs sing, When comes the springtime weather! And, far and wide, their accents ring, Some singly, some together, To tell their sweethearts loved to wake And meet them on the moonlit lake:

'Tis said, to him, who haps to hark
The first frog chorus ringing
From out the boggy waters dark,
Good luck its way is winging;
And, so, when comes the early spring,
For frogs I list, when, first, they sing!

THE BROWN THRASHER

Late, on a June-time afternoon, Strolled I o'er meadow lea, Listing the red-winged blackbird's tune,— Sweet, liquid, "Con-quer-ee!" Gathering daisies, fair and white, (All that my hands could hold,) Then, as the slanting sunbeams bright Gilded the western wold,

Down the wood-road, at lazy pace, Crept Bobby Burns and I, Watching the flies, with wings of lace, Fluttering fleetly by;

Skirting the road, the rare cornel Gleamed in the fading light; Sprays of viburnum earthward fell, Heavy with blooms of white:

All seemed so still in the sombre light, Gazed I the woods around Fearing to see the Ouphe of Might Owning this fairy ground;

Suddenly, dog and I stood still; Here was the Goblin come! How Bobby's heart and mine did thrill, Tongues of both growing dumb!

Sharp was the sound which seemed to say, (Whilst we both spellbound stood,) "Scoundrels, begone! aroint! away! Out of my own loved wood!"

Then, with a whizzing, whirring sound, Swift, from a pine-tree's crown, Looking in majesty around, Lightly, a bird flew down;

There, on a bending branchlet bare, Full seconds six, stood he, Asking us why that we did dare In his domains to be;

Nought could we answer, I or Bob, Handsome, brown thrasher, there, Thinking we'd come his nest to rob, Rob of his nestlings fair;

Never a note this troubadour Sang to us poachers bold; Only a scolding did he pour Out o'er the dusky wold:

Often, we've wandered, since that day, Rusty-red bird to see, Hoping to hear his dashing lay Sung from the tall pine-tree:

We would not harm thee, -not for gold, Bird of the amber eyes, So, to thy breast thy babes enfold, Safe, 'neath the sunset skies!

And, merry thrush, oh, grant to me, Ere to the south you fly, Just one more moment's glimpse of thee, Up in you pine-tree high!

LAMENT OF THE RIVER RHINE

'Mong the peaks of the Alps, clothed, at sunset, In the hues fit to please the proud peer, Where the eidleweiss blooms, And Gotthard lonely looms, Is the home that to me is so dear!

When the snows on the peaks melt but slightly,-Can no longer the sunrays withstand, Then, the mighty mass creeps, And the chamois fast leaps O'er the breast of the glacier grand:

And, now, spring flings her flowery sceptre Over high Alpine gorges, so green, While bright brooks wind their way Over rocks, gaunt and gray, Gayly dancing bare boulders between:

Erelong, too, there are seen, flowing swiftly, Two small streams, (each a silvery thread,) O'er rough pebbles and stones Singing lays, in low tones, As they enter Lake Constance to wed:

Then, emerging from baptism and bridal, In deep sorrow, again, they divide, Each one wending his way Towards old ocean, so gray, There, forever, in grief, to abide:

Know that I, humble I, am one streamlet Which is known by the name of the Rhine; And, before I hide head In old ocean's broad bed, I've resolved to do something quite fine;

And, so, sometimes, I spread thro' a country Where fair vineyards are seen, far and wide; Then, a forest of pine, On my right, doth combine To set off the soft sheen of my tide:

Ofttimes, too, on a sudden, I narrow 78

And leap on thro' ravines, like a flash,
In a cataract wild,
Like a querulous child,
My soft spray 'gainst their walls high to dash:

Then, again, all so peaceful, I wander
Where quaint hamlets and villages lie,—
At the feet of steep hills,
Down which course gleaming rills,
With gray, ivy-clad castles, near by:

Soon, my surface is strewn with isles verdant, And my waters abound with fine fish; Pretty, pleasure boats skim O'er my glimmering brim, And to stop, here, fore'er, is my wish:

But, I, now, thro' great towns must go strolling,— Thro' old Coblentz and famous Cologne; And I gaze, when I dare, On the church that's so fair That o'er all the wide world it is known:

Ah! my end, drawing near, makes me shudder;
And, as crawl I thro' Holland, so low,
Icy mountains I crave;
Oh, once more, might I lave
Those huge crags o'er whose sides lichens grow!

Woe is me! I've my home left, forever!—
The bright, happy, loved land of my birth!
I shall, ne'er, with waves light,
Wish a gladsome goodnight
To the spot to me fairest on earth!

YE BRAZEN BELLS

Ye brazen bells, ye brazen bells, What mystic magic in thee dwells! Thou'st power to cheer me with thy note, Or choke with sobs my throbbing throat!

Whene'er I hear thy vesper chime, My soul is filled with thoughts sublime; In yonder kirk I kneel in prayer, Clear anthems thrilling all the air:

Lo! when a bridal peal rings out, I list the words of priest devout;— The circlet see on bride's white hand, There, placed by lover, proud and grand:

But, whilst I heed the tardy toll, That numbers years of some, poor soul, I wonder if his spirit free, Thou doleful bell, doth hark to thee! Ye blithesome bells, I love thee, well, Whene'er thy music sweet doth swell! Oh, may thine accents, pure and clear, Be sounds which, last, on earth, I hear!

In turrets tall, ye, still, shall swing, When future bards thy praises sing; But, none will love as deep as she Who penned, dear bells, these lines to thee!

Now, merry bells, thy measures sweet Fling o'er the land on pinions fleet! Ring out the song which sorrow quells! Ring, far and wide, blest bells, blest bells!

And, as ye sway, in belfries high, Up, towards the bright and smiling sky, Oh, let thy lips, this morning, say, "Kind Friends, be glad! 'tis New Year's Day!"

POWER OF MIND OVER BODY

Like the breezes softly sighing
Thro' a field of bearded wheat,
So, God's Angels come to cheer me
With their messages, so sweet;—

Messages of love and comfort, Messages of strength divine Bearing me on wings of eagles, Filling me with holy wine;—

Teaching me that all God's children By His Love were perfect made, And that, ne'er, in retribution, Was dire sickness on them laid;—

But, that He to prayer will listen, And if we, with contrite soul, Ask His aid, with faith believing, He will, straightway, make us whole:

Now, the body is, they tell us, In great measure, like the mind; If the soul is pure and sinless, Then, its house we fair shall find:

Didst thou, never, notice, Sweetheart, How that fear will pale the face? How that bashfulness in blushes Paints the cheek with rarest grace?

Have you, never, read, "The Craven!" Branded on the coward's brow? Have you, neither, marked, "The Hero!" On some bronzéd cheek, ere now?

Or, perchance, you've seen, "The Glutton!" Stamped distinctly on some face; Or, may be, the one word, "Selfish!" On some forchead framed in lace;

If it be that human faces
Mirror thoughts of hate and sin,
If that care can carve deep wrinkles,
If that eyes show vice within,

It is very plain, (I know it,)
That unselfish feelings sweet,
Surely'll keep this transient temple
Healthy, strong and fair to meet!

LULLABY

The sun has sunk behind the hills,
As fades the evening sky;
A million gleaming, gurgling rills,
(Which leaped from mountains high,)
Have ceased their laughing lays, so loud,
And, in old ocean blue,
Reflecting ev'ry opal cloud,
They chant a hymn for you, Sweetheart,
They chant a hymn for you!

They ask the Lord you safe to keep From dangers of the night;—
Your tired lids to close in sleep;
But, at the dawn's gray light,
They pray that you may, rested, wake,
And, on your bended knee,
That to your God your heart you take,
And ask Him His to be, Sweetheart,
And ask Him His to be!

"So, close your eyes in perfect peace!"
The wavelets sing, off-shore;
"God's tender care will, never, cease;
But, now, and evermore,
In clasp, as loving and as strong
As ocean's tireless tide,
Will bear you on Life's Way along
Till you in Heaven abide, Sweetheart,
Till you in Heaven abide!"

LISTEN TO THE FAIRIES!

List to the fairies' music, Dear, Listen, these days of June, List and their orchestra you'll hear, Always, in perfect tune! Surely, some morning, you can see, Beating his little drum, Yonder, a yellow bumble-bee Big as one half your thumb!

Round the tall foxgloves, red and white, Flies he to creep, at last, Deep in some cup, clear out of sight, Still, beating drumsticks, fast:

Then, where the purple iris droops, Down in the oozy swamp, There, you may see, 'mong insect troops, Dragon-flies sail in pomp;

Brightly their burnished backs will gleam, Barred with dark brown and green, And, where the gnats the thickets teem, Scores of them may be seen,

Whirling their gauzy wings so fast Scarcely their rapid flight One can discern, tho', like a blast, Whiz they throughout the night:

Yet, there's another fairy bold, Living in yonder bog; Gay gleams his jacket trimmed with gold, When, on a floating log,

Plays he his flute, so loud and clear, Diff'ring in tone, they say, Wholly from that of others, near, Who in the frog-pond play:

When comes the night, you'll hear that elf, Dressed all in black, so plain, Thinking of others, ne'er, of self, Out in the dark and rain;

Whom do I mean but the cricket, Child, Sounding her violin, Always, so modest, meek and mild, Guilty of ne'er a sin!

Certainly, ev'ry one you meet, Often, doth list, at night, Breezes their solos sweet repeat Played on quaint leaf-harps light:

All of you, Children, must have heard Notes of the stream's guitar, Sweet as the song of a pretty bird Heard in the woods afar: These are some few of the fairy folk, If you but hark, you'll hear! This is the truth and not a joke I'm you a-telling, Dear!

So, use your ears and both your eyes,
These charming days of June,
And elfin music, I surmise,
You will enjoy, right soon!

KING ALFRED AND THE PEASANT

'Twas winter weather in England old When King Alfred had to flee, (Without a foll'wer,) one evening cold, Before the hosts of Dane Guthrum bold, Thro' the woods of Athelney:

No cuckoo cheered Alfred's aching heart, But, beneath the oak-trees, swine, Before his steps, with a grunt, did start, As, in the track of a keeper's cart, Hurried he to see a sign

Of some poor place he might hide his head
To escape the ruthless foe;
And, soon, he spied the bright firelight red
That on towards a swincherd's hut him led,
In the evening afterglow:

Beneath the roof of this humble cot
The good king found rest and food;
And, here, one day, 'twas the monarch's lot
To watch some loaves on the hearthstone hot,
Whilst he fashioned arrows rude:

Disguised in clothes such as peasants wear,
The kind swineherd knew him not;
And, so it was the man's dame did dare
To order him for the bread to care,
As it baked in the ashes hot:

But, Alfred's heart was so sad and sore
He forgot the bread to tend;
And, when the woman looked in the door
And found it burning her guest before,
To her wrath was there no end;

"You idle dog!" she, in rage, cried out,
"You'll not turn these cakes, so sweet,
But, let them burn to a crisp, no doubt,
(Whilst, there, you sharpen your arrows stout,)
Tho' of them you'll, gladly, eat!"

And, thus she rated the stranger, there, Unaware her king was he; And England's King did her scolding bear, As, musing, there, in the firelight fair, He made plans of peace to be,

When, brave and bold, from old Devonshire Rose his subjects the foe to quell, And, once again, Britain's bowmen dear, At home, slept, happy, without a fear Of the Danes in dale and dell!

MORNING ON THE MOUNTAINS

'Tis morning on the mountains;
The steely sky to blue is born;
'Tis morning in the highlands;
Awake, ye sheep and nimble fawn!

'Tis morning on the mountains;
The dewdrops flash on larches tall;
'Tis morning in the highlands;
'Ye birds, your love notes sweetly call!

'Tis morning on the mountains; In dawning light the brooklets gleam; 'Tis morning in the highlands; Sing, streams, to greet the Sun God's beam!

'Tis morning on the mountains;
The vapors rise from valleys green;
'Tis morning in the highlands;
Fair flowers, your faces let be seen!

'Tis morning on the mountains; The hamlet, soon, ye'll see below; 'Tis morning in the highlands; Blow, softly, summer breezes, blow!

'Tis morning on the mountains;
The insect hum breaks on the air;
'Tis morning in the highlands;
Arise, thou Sluggard! dost thou dare,

When Nature's just the fairest,
To lie in bed and waste thy time?
To miss this lovely vision,—
This sight so charming and sublime?

Ye Seekers after Beauty, Go search where heathery hilltops blue Apollo kisses gently, Each morn, in sign of friendship true! Ah! had but I the talent
To sketch with skilful fingers keen,
When Morning, on the mountains,
Discloses her enchantment scene!

WEBSTER'S FIRST CASE

The American Statesman, great Webster, Saw the light, the first time, one spring day, Spending years on a farm of few acres, Where his brother and he raked the hay:

Here, one summer, a woodchuck raised havoc With the corn they had planted in pride, And, at length, after endless endeavors, Him they caught in a trap, long and wide:

Little Daniel, (e'er, fond of dumb creatures,)
Felt quite sad, as at captive he gazed,
To think, soon, he'd be slain; so, his father
He begged freedom to give the beast dazed:

To petition his parent made answer,
"The poor animal's case we will try;
You, Ezekiel, as lawyer against him,
While you, Dan, for the woodchuck must vie!

"I, your sire, will, hard by, sit and listen
To the pleas of th' attorneys with care;
At the end of the court's weighty session,
As the judge, I'll, then, give verdict fair!"

So, the suit was begun by Ezekiel,
Who, in presence of prisoner well-scared,
Told how crops by the culprit were ruined,—
How all sorts of mean mischief he dared;—

How much trouble and worry he caused them; Then, in finishing plea, short but strong, He proposed, for the damage committed, That the thief should be hung with a thong,

And his skin, (his sole feature redeeming,)
To the town be, then, taken and sold;
At these words judge's eyes softly twinkled;
It was plain he liked well the plan bold:

It was, now, Daniel's turn to case argue; And, with pity and love playing part, He arose, and, in tones earnest, eager, For the prisoner he pled from his heart:

He explained how the grain had been taken
To keep breath in a creature of God,—
How no kernel was wilfully wasted
By the one, who, like them, trod the sod:

After showing, most clearly, good reasons
Why the poor, trembling brute should be freed,
His long speech by this question he ended,
While the court to his words paid good heed;

"O great Judge, before whom stand I pleading, Reflect well! your brains cudgel and rack! Do you dare," and his voice slightly wavered, "To take life which you, ne'er, can give back?"

The old man, brought to tears by th' oration, Quite forgetful of all but beast's woe, To his son screamed, in tones of a trumpet, "Here! Zeke, Zeke, that poor woodchuck let go!"

ECHO LAKE

Outside a rustic boathouse old, Once, sat three friends and I; Around us frowned the mountains bold; Above us smiled the sky:

We watched the shades the crags o'er-creep,— The birds the waters skim; We watched the clouds that fled, like sheep, Beyond the horizon's rim,

Before the breeze which combed the lake In many a gleaming wave; We listened to the echoes wake The stillness of the grave:

Had not it been a vessel small
Up-ploughed the lovely lake,
(Whose whistle rang from mountain wall
And made our pulses quake,)

We would have wished,—my friends and I, On Echo Lake's loved shore The calm and charm of sea and sky Would last, forevermore:

As sat I, there, one friend beside, It seemed to me his eye Grew azure as the glistening tide Beneath the cloud-flecked sky;

His brow, which, but an hour before, Was flushed by falsehood's tale, Grew, now, serene as the lake that bore Upon its breast one sail:

But, all too soon, it came the hour When we must leave the place,— Leave lake and cliff and tiny tower On old Bald Mountain's face:

I've never seen this charming spot Since that fair, August day, When, with three friends, 'twas my sweet lot Along the lake to stray:

I wonder if, to-day, the vale
Is green with maiden-hair!
I wonder if the ghost-flower pale
The dim, dark woods, still, bear!

I wonder if the wavelets light, To-day, smile just as sweet As when they danced, that morning bright, Ashore, to kiss our feet!

Ah! Echo Lake, embosomed deep Among the mountains high, I would, at last, by you find sleep, Beneath the bright, blue sky!

And, might the birds, that build their nests In Eagle Cliff, above, Sing, flying o'er the craggy crests, A dirge, in tender love:

Then, if there comes that evil day
When I am last of kin,
Inter my bones, dear Friends, I pray,
Beside the mountain lin!

That lin, so fair, so smiling, gay, With fir-tree setting rare, In mem'ry of that summer day When Eden found I, there!

And raise no carvings, rich or rare, Above my pulseless breast, But, let a boulder, rough and bare, In lieu of a headstone, rest!

A rock, (by Nature's chisel hewn, To which the mosses cling, And, o'er whose mica-spots the moon May flash, at midnight,) bring!

Each spring, fair ferns, with hair-like stems, Will cluster round my head; And violets, (those pure, wood gems,) Will bow above my bed:

And, then, from morn throughout the night, I'll list the lapping wave A-trolling, in its tenor light, Around my wildwood grave:

Kind Friends, this favor sole I crave; I ask for nothing more; But, by the Lake, oh, make my grave! This grant! I you implore!

AN INDIAN LAMENT

O Sharon, town of lakes and hills, Of forests and of flowers, My heart with joy and rapture thrills To ramble thro' thy bowers!

Among thy forests fair are found Full many a noble tree Which grew when o'er the hilly ground Roamed bands of red men free:

They fished upon the waters clear Of Massapoag afar; O'er steep Moose Hill they chased the deer Till shone the evening star:

King Philip passed its tavern old, Ere camped he for the night, The eve before he grew so bold To Medfield set alight;

But, spared the king old Sharon's inn Because some chief had said The Indians' friend the owner'd been,— The red man he had fed:

The lakes and streams, yet, witness bear Of Philip's warriors brave, Who, long ago, on foot did fare Thro' woods their waters lave:

Perchance, the bronzéd Indian belle Her dusky locks did deck With blossoms of the white cornel, Beside yon brawling beck:

On Sharon's many hillocks high,
'Mong chestnuts, (tall and trim,)
And scarlet oaks the birches sigh,
When day is growing dim;

They grieve because they furnish not,
Today, the swift canoe,
In twilight cool or noontide hot,
To cleave the lakelet blue:

Lake Wolomolopoag, still, smiles, As in King Philip's time, Tho' o'er its stretch of azure miles Sounds, now, no paddles' chime:

No more, the Indian skims the lake; No more, he slays the deer; The white man's followed in his wake, And, now, he's master, here:

But, on the names of lake and stream, (Which have their meanings sweet,)
The residents must, often, dream,—
When Sharon was the seat

Of tribes of men who lived and died Upon the very ground Where, maybe, you and I abide, Tho' hear our ears no sound

Except in murm'rings of the breeze, Upon some summer's day, Which whisper to the nodding trees Some sad, sweet, Indian lay:

Oh, Sharon Town, I love thee, well!
I love thy hills of green!
I love each dale and mossy dell
When damped with dewy sheen;

And, as I rove thy woodlands wild, In search of windflowers white, I feel I'm, too, a forest child Like those of whom I write!

My soul with sympathy outflows
To them, who, once, were torn
From all they loved, by pale-faced foes,
To die, alone, forlorn!

WHERE THE MAYFLOWER FAIR YE'LL FIND

"Twixt moss banks scattered thick with leaf-mould, Tucked up warmly with snow-blankets sparkling, Mother Earth in her arms doth enfold Wayward brooks which away would flow darkling;

But, in fetters of ice lie they long, Waiting, watching for leaf-buds a-swelling;— Listening, too, for the bluebird's sweet song Wondrous tales of the springtime a-telling:

When, behold! the south wind and the sun

Melt the snow on the hillocks and mountains; Streams, released from their bonds, laughing, run O'er rough rocks, forming myriad fountains:

'Neath the trees, (in whose bursting buds brown Tiny leaflets are, yet, snugly sleeping,) 'Bove the snow, (ling'ring, still, tho' we frown,) A bright blossom is, now, coyly, peeping:

This pink sprite of the dim, sylvan glade At her orisons, ever, is kneeling; From the morn till the gloaming doth fade, (When wood-warblers sweet pibrochs are pealing,)

She exhales from her rare, ruddy lip Purer incense than, e'er, rose from altar; And, as bees and swift dragon-flies sip Vestal's nectar, she bends o'er her psalter;

Hast thou, never, dear Friends, in glad days, Sought where trailing arbutus abideth?— Troudden, e'er, dusky, rustic by-ways Where her meek, modest visage she hideth?

Thou hast not? Then, some halcyon spring, When bright brooks thro' the heather are dancing, When the redwings their rippling notes fling, As, in glee, thro' the glen go they glancing,

Seek the guardian nymph of the wood, At her vigil, her incense diffusing, While her bright, blushing face in a hood Of brown leaflets hides she, deeply musing!

It is here, in this tree-vaulted fane,
Where the soft-feathered tribe chant Love's story,
That the Mayflower shows us how vain
Is a life that's lived not to God's Glory!

SUNSET

When drowsy tinklings lull the far-off fold, And shadows lengthen over heath and wold, Great Phoebus comes in gorgeous car of red, With purple pillows 'neath his radiant head, Rich, crimson curtains shutting out the light Emitted by his fiery steeds of might; And, as the driver guides the golden reins, The night shades fall from out their flowing manes; From stallions' hoofs snap sparks along the way, Which gleam like silver lamps, at closing day; When, lo! in the fading West, fair Hesperus appears,

(Aurora's lovely son, so said the ancient seers;)

And, when Diana, in her hunting gear, Thro' night's blue gateway, sweet and coy, doth peer,

The night-wind, rising, whispers, low and light, "The day is done! Good-night, dear Love, good night!"

THE ROBIN'S NEST

On the homestead's sunny, southern front, Topping one porch pillar tall, It has been, for years, a robin's wont To erect her cottage small:—

A cot made of sticks and straw and string, Plastered o'er by mud, with care, Fashioned snug and warm, thro' which doth ring Love songs sweet of the feathered pair:

The projecting slates of the homestead's roof Serve to shield it from the rain; And a maple tree, not far aloof, Breaks the breeze from the rolling main:

Two fine broods the robins raised, this year, In their mud-walled mansion fair; But, no more, the nestlings' cries I hear; All is desolate and bare:

I, no longer, see the father fly
To that habitat, aloft,
With a worm for them that, helpless, lie
In their straw-lined cradle soft;

For, the little ones outgrew the nest, (Where the three blue eggs, once, lay,) 'Neath their mother's bosom, closely pressed, Thro' each charming, springtime day:

So, no longer, sounds, at early morn, The sweet, tender lullaby Of the mother bird to loved new-born, Thro' the house beneath the sky;

But, on looking, closely, near the ground, ('Neath clay castle of the air,) Birdlings brown I spy who'll, soon, be bound To a realm they deem more fair,

With their parents, who, the nesting o'er, Have discarded vests of red, And, in dingy doublets, south, will soar, By a wondrous instinct led:

May the One who guides the onward flight

Of these birds,—my neighbors rare, Be to them a bright and shining light Showing up the fowler's snare!

And, another spring, ere leaves grow green, May the same plump robins two Return, once again, to the well-loved scene Of their wooing sweet and true!

May the mud-built cot be garnished, new,
And prepared for a summer's stay,
Neath the bright, blue sky and the falling dew,
Ere the hawthorns bud in May!

NATURE'S LESSON

Oft, are seen in tropic regions, Growing in the arid soil, Plants, with fleshy leaflets juicy, Armed with thorns all foes to foil; Mailed in scorn and spine-like armor, Year by year, alone, they stand, Help, e'en intercourse, refusing With all dwellers in that land:

In their pride and haughty grandeur,
On they live for many a year,
When, behold! change, great and wondrous,
In the aloe doth appear;
From below a spikelet rises
Crowned with blossoms, fair and rare,
Sweetest incense wide diffusing
Thro' the scorching, desert air:

While abroad it flings its fragrance, Turning spot to hallowed ground, Lo! its spines become quite harmless; Withered, fall its thorns around; It has lived to see the folly To exist for self alone; And, ere yielding up Life's burden, Its repentance 'twould make known:

Lessons great the cactus teaches
To us hardened, human plants,—
That, tho' youth hath been most selfish,
Tho' our hearts have been the haunts,
Once, of thoughts impure, unholy,
We have, yet, a chance to show
That God's Love our souls hath softened,
That we'd soothe another's woe:

Let us, then, like old agave, Tho' our locks be thin and hoar, Broadcast, strew our souls' affection Ere we reach the Pearly Door, On its shining hinges swinging, Giving peeps of joys untold To each wond'ring, yearning mortal Who would tread the Streets of Gold!

Then, each face, with love transfigured, Bright will glow in age's light; And each tongue, (before, so silent,) Clear will sing its last good night; Like the swan which chants once, only, Sweetest strains that ear hath heard, Let us soothe some soul, ere dying, Be it but by one, kind word!

JULY

The country lanes are dusty, brown and dry; The sun pours out his fiercest, hottest heat; From mullein stalks bold kingbirds, "Kip per!"

As down they dart unwary bugs to meet, While, low, the goldfinch gay is calling, "Te tée de de!" from out the grassy glen;

The hills are hazy; The kine are lazy, For, July has come, again!

The modest daisy, loved by Junetime's bride, No more, from verdant fields, our eyes salute; But, in her place, St. John's wort, in his pride, Each weary passer-by desires to suit;

The milkweed's head's becoming heavy, And grosser grows, and pinker, prouder, when

It hears a-coming
The bees a-humming,
Now, July has come, again!

The fields, a month ago, so soft and green, Today, are parched and stubby, stiff and sere; And, on their yellow bosoms may be seen, Stacked high, the grasses of the early year;

While, hungry, mong the cocks are hopping The restless redwings of the boggy fen,

The seeds a-getting, All else forgetting, Since July has come, again;

The pimpernel, (old shepherds' weather glass,) Its tiny, purple petals, never, close; And cobwebs, on the shortly-shaven grass, Predict, "No rain!" upon the corn in rows; "Caw! caw!" the crows we hear a-calling, With dreamy pewees, ev'ry now and then,

The woods a-waking

Whilst we are baking, For, July has come, again!

And when the sunset comes to stain the sky With vivid hues of purple and of red, The quails, "Bob White!" from yonder meadows cry,

With chimney swifts a-skimming overhead; "Chip! chip!" we hear them, ceaseless, chatter; Then, in a second, gone from sight and ken,

With ease a-swooping
While we lie drooping,
Now, July has come, again!

No cooling, evening breezes come to free Our tired frames from this oppressive heat; But, yet, we scent the hay, from o'er the lea, Which greets us, now, with incense passing sweet; Then, in those moorlands, blue and boundless, (So fair, and, yet, unknown to mortal men,)

Arcturus, beaming, We see a-gleaming, For, July has come, again!

MY BOYS

I dream, often, of the pupils in my school of long ago,

And to think I'll see them, never, almost makes the teardrops flow:

There was Clifford, (now, a snowdrop in the heavenly pastures green,)
On whose marble brow devotion to his duty, e'er,

was seen:

There was Henry;—(how his scrawling I can see, to-day, again!)

Now, a lawyer, land deeds scribbling, o'er his ear, still, yet, a pen:

Harry, too, comes up before me,—lazy Harry, leaning low

On his elbows, after throwing on my desk a rose in blow:

Then, I think, with deepest pleasure, of dear Rob, with cheek so red,

Full of mischief, but, so truthful, numbered now among the dead:

On the wind, ofttimes, is wafted, full and clear, the rest above,

Bird notes sweet of choir-boy Charlie, like an angel's song of love:

Tiny Dan I hear reciting with fair, tear-stained face bent low,

And his clothing hung in tatters down from elbow, knee and toe:

Blue-eyed Will I see, so joyous when I on his lessons smiled.

But, so filled with jealous anger if I praised another child:

Harris, too, I hold in mem'ry,—Harris of the active mind,

Since, a graduate of Harvard, wedding wife, ah! so refined!

How black James's dark eye sparkled, when his reader he could scan!

How his forehead rose in wrinkles, when the number hour began!

There was smiling, Syrian Yesnig, ev'ry day, his teacher's joy;—

Always, perfect in his lessons and his conduct, too; dear boy!

Little Lee, ne'er, half so happy as when asked a theme to write,

Now, an editor imposing in the paper world, so bright:

Last, I'll speak of bashful Otis,—Otis with the eye

And the dimpled cheek where teardrops rained, when kept for tricks he'd done;—

I can feel his arms around me, my forgiveness full to win,

As he offered some wee token in atonement for his sin;—

Otis, after this, a soldier handsome looking, brave and gay

In his uniform becoming, as he marched to war away:

And a score of other darlings, for whose names I've here no space,

But, whose mem'ry will, forever, in my bosom hold its place:

Which of all these boys, I mention, do you think I loved the best,—

Harris, Henry, Charles or Clifford, were my preference expressed?

Whom could I but love most fondly other than the hazel-eyed,—

The young rogue, who, years long after, for his country would have died?

Years have passed, and deep-set wrinkles Time has furrowed on my brow;

But, the boys, (my once loved pupils,) tho' grown, bearded men, are, now,

Just the same as when I listened to their childish voices sweet:—

Just the same as when I saw them sitting in each battered seat;

And I wish that, all together, I might meet my boys, once more!

See them gathered in a circle, ere another Goes Before!

THE INVALID'S VISION

A woman, weak, weary and wasted From sickness and sorrow so deep She thought almost death she had tasted, (For nought praying God save to sleep,)

Lay back, ill at ease, on her pillows, As o'er her frail form surged, in glee, The demons of pain like the billows Which swamp helpless skiffs of the sea:

When, just as twelve strokes broke the stillness, And hushed were all sounds save bells' ring, She heard, in her sadness and illness, A sound, upward making her spring

To see, near her bed, a form beaming, (Of tall and heroic a mould,) In white clad, his halo a-gleaming Like meteors bright, as each fold

Of mantle like silver did shimmer In the light by his halo diffused, While but for a second did shiver This woman, (forever, unused

To visits from angels, so holy,)
Tho', oft, she had read that on earth
Some few, favored beings, tho' lowly,
Have seen these fair spirits of worth:

She waited to hear what the message Might be which this messenger brought, Or what happy outcome might presage This visit with mystery fraught:

He raised not the veil form enshrouded In many a soft, glistening fold, But, gazed at the face with pain clouded, And said, "Follow me!" when there rolled

Thro' the innermost depths of her being Full strength and youth's vigor complete; She leaped from her couch, the sprite seeing Precede her from bedroom to street:

Where e'er her guide led her she followed,— Thro' poverty, misery, vice;— Thro' highways and byways where wallowed Low creatures whose heads bore a price:

At last, when her heart ached with grieving, When tears poured from eyes in a stream, She turned to her leader, sighs heaving Her bosom, and asked, "Dost thou deem

"There's help for this terrible anguish? For all this great woe I have seen? Can I, selfsh sinner, e'er vanquish These prickings of conscience, so keen?

"Alas! for myself I've lived, ever!
For myself have I sorrowed and wept!
For self have I wrought, thinking, never,
Of these,—my sad sisters bereft!"

When she these words heart-felt had uttered,
The angel turned toward her, once more;—
Threw back o'er his head veil that fluttered,
Revealing a face, ne'er before,

She'd seen half so lovely or gracious,
(With orbs of a dark, lustrous sheen,)
And, high, on his forehead veracious
A crown lay more sparkling, I ween,

Than rubies, (or diamonds, fairer,)
Which make monarchs' tiars to gleam;
While, just on the top of tiara
A cross with this motto did seem

To fairly flash fire, as it glittered With light, (which to Heaven high did soar,) "Christ's Cross hold thou up, heart imbittered, And peace shalt thou know, evermore!"

As read she this sweet admonition
From out flashing words of the cross,
A feeling of patience, submission
Thrilled, swiftly, her frame, and, like dross

Seemed all of this world's fleeting glory; So, then, she determined to give What, there, she had seen in this story That others might listen and live:

As this she resolved, the form burning Of beauteous messenger fair Dissolved into mist, and, she, turning, In vain, sought his sweet presence, there:

Yes, she in her chamber was lying, As formerly, stretched on the bed, But, God had, at last, heard her sighing,— Had answered the prayers she had said;—

Had sent her a vision of beauty
To show there were others less blest;—
To show her the pathway of duty
Lies, oft, o'er the rocks of unrest:

When many, long months had dragged slowly The woman grew stout, strong and well; But, ne'er, she'll forget message holy God sent her cold nature to quell.

NEARER TO NATURE'S HEART

Nearer to Nature's heart! Nearer her breast! Oh, let us, never, part! There let me rest!

Listing her gentle voice, where pine-trees sigh,— That is my sweetest choice! There, let me die!

Breathing her flowery breath, off, on the hills,— That would be easy death, there, by the rills!

Feeling the pulse of spring leap thro' her chest,— Hearing her throstles sing,—that's bliss, the best!

Would, Friends, in yonder town, I could expound Joys of the wildwood brown, here, have I found!

Free from the coil and care, free from the strife, This is existence rare! This is true life!

THE LAST REQUEST

(Dedicated to my Friend, Miss M. H.)

A noble lady, she, Black-haired, red-cheeked, and tall, With deep brown eyes which laughed with glee And looked in love on all: Within a city school, She taught the upper class, And, 'neath her firm but gentle rule, Progressed each lad and lass:

In music they excelled, For, music loved she best,— This teacher who their interest held 'Bove ev'ry one the rest:

One day, a message came, As in her school she stood, To which was signed her father's name, Her dear, old father good:

She read the letter thro'; The master's door she sought, And, (in a short, brief interview,) She told what news was brought:

Her mother, dying, lay;
For her to come she prayed;
And dear Miss H——— was on her way,
Ere day began to fade:

Long miles had she to ride To that far, country town, Where on a sunny, green hillside There lay the homestead brown:

Each minute seemed an hour; Each hour was full an age, And night had, now, begun to lower Ere entered she the stage;

But, at the old home door, That stage she left, at last; She saw the look her father wore, As, kissing him, she passed,

On, towards the bedroom, where, Upon its couch, did lie The mother with her snowy hair And swiftly glazing eye;

She knelt beside the bed; Her mother's face she kissed, And, as she stroked her silver head, These words she, then, did list:

"My Martha, play the hymn I, always, loved so well!" And duller grew the eyeballs dim, And down their curtains fell: The daughter, at this plea, The old piano neared, And played the hymn, twice thro', ere she In yonder chamber peered;

The notes had died away; The daughter looked in love Upon a form which silent lay; The soul had soared Above;

No trace of pain was, there; A smile o'erspread the face, Which, circled by its silver hair, Seemed crowned with heavenly grace:

This tale was told to me By her whose music bore Her mother o'er Death's seething Sea To yonder Shining Shore,

Where she, in peace, doth rest, But, where she, still, must long To bind that daughter to her breast Who Death made sweet with song!

OH, WORSHIP IN THE FANES OF NATURE!

Of what avail is it to raise
The costly temples of these days,—
Rare poems grand in sculptured stone
Like that which smiles in old Cologne,
Or, the Cathedral of Milan,—
Famed masterpiece of brainy man?

Dost think thy vows and prayers, Dear Heart, (Lisped low, in such great works of art,) Will reach the Heavenly Courts on High, More surely, than pure thought or sigh, Soft breathed, in some rude, humble shed Scarce yielding shelter for thine head?

The earliest temple was the wood 'Neath which th' inspiréd prophet stood: In such fair fanes, where brooks intone The service to the wind's low moan, Oh, why not gather, during days When thrushes trill their roundelays?

The deep groined roof of forest hall Is borne aloft by pine-trees tall; Here, crouched in some grand evergreen, Ofttimes, a squirrel may be seen; And, sitting on his haunches, there, To crunch a nut, (his chosen fare,)

A priest he seems, in gown of gray, With hands outstretched, about to pray; Or, bowing low, the preacher stands With Holy Host within his hands,—A wholesome wafer God hath blessed For him to eat, this Day of Rest:

Why not, with thrush and squirrel gray, 'Neath leafy fane, in summer, pray? Then, cast the alms, (which thou canst spare,) No, not to some old church repair, Nor, yet, to build a minster grand, (The fairest be it in the land,)

But, give to her, whose limbs are cold As yonder marble pavement old On which she kneels, with lips grown dumb And shiv'ring figure stiff and numb; Behind whose heels, with stealthy tread, Prowls on that wolf,—fierce famine dread!

That blind man, groping with his cane To find the door of yon bright fane,—Exchange his tattered coat, so worn, For one of fleecy warmth, this morn! A ten-pound note, (expended, there, Between this piteous, pauper pair,)

Will do a thousand times, I swear, (And you'll regret your action, ne'er!) More good than building, where you may, A kirk of stone, tho' fair as day! The purest shrine upon the sod Is where th' unselfish kneel to God!

TOILERS OF THE SEA

Far 'neath the surface of yonder southern sea, Year after year, toil a host of workers wee; Budding and branching like boughs of leafy trees; Fashioning cells like the comb of honey-bees; Drawing from Neptune the lime to lay their walls; Giving their lives, e'en, to form their fairy halls; Toiling, for ages, with, ne'er, a moment's rest; Toiling till hardened is ev'ry tiny breast:

Millions of polyps thus work, by day and night, Down 'neath the water where shadowy is the light, Building those islands, like giant horse-shoes lone, Out in the ocean, with surges making moan; When to the surface they come, their work is o'er; Now, they may list to the billows' rush and roar Trying to ruin those bulwarks, strong yet fair, Built of the bodies of countless creatures rare:

Hard tho' the coral of which the isles are made, Ceaseless is warfare by boist'rous billows weighed; So, after years, some small bits to dust are ground; Seaweeds are caught by sharp, ragged rocks around; Logs, loosed from wrecks, float ashore and all decay, Making a soil which increases, day by day; Then, seeds, by birds or by balmy breezes borne, Quickly upspring the low islands to adorn:

Soon, groves of palms shoot their tall, straight stems on high, (Tossing their green, feath'ry fans against the sky,) Wooing the ships in their calm lagoons to hide, Safe, till the tempest, outside the isles, hath died; Then, when the sunshine peeps thro' the rifts of

gray,
Falling in blessing upon the little bay,
Sweet is the scene to the eyes of sailors brave,
Far from their homes o'er the briny ocean wave:

Outside the islet, the angry surges flash, Breaking in foam, as against the rock they dash; Inside the ring, with its beach of shining sand, (As in a cradle, by graceful palm-trees fanned,) Safe, lie the vessels, while playful wavelets lave Keels which but now rocked above a yawning grave; There, may they anchor till blue is white-capped sea! There, may they rest till the storm-clouds landward flee!

Little, the workers, (who wrought these isles, so fair,)

Knew what grand structures their patient skill could dare;

But, 'twas their instinct, their duty, (shall we say?) So, on they drudged, hour by hour and day by day: Thus, may we men these true toilers of the sea Take for a pattern, and patient workmen be, Ne'er, asking, "Why?" but, accepting work we're

Till tasks are done, and our earthly chain be riven!

SLEEP

Most gracious gift of God, O Sleep,
Thy comradeship I hope to keep!
For many months, you passed me by,
Nor heeded prayer or tear or sigh;
And came but at the birth of day,
Wrapped round with misty blankets gray!
But, now, methinks, thou art my friend,—
My guardian angel to the end!
So, when have flown the hours of day.

Oh, hover o'er my hearthstone gray! Then, when I cast me on my bed, Stand, close, O Sleep, to couch's head! Thy rustling garments let me hear Before the midnight hour is near! Thy finger on mine eyelids lay And banish ev'ry thought of day! With magic touch each pain reprove! All needless worries far remove! Blot out each sorrow!-chafing care! Allow, no more, that dread night-mare, But, bid forgetfulness to stay Till rosy grows the dawning day! Then, break the band, O Dark-robed Sleep, Which you upon these evelids keep, And, for a few years more, I pray, Revisit me, at fall of day! A few short years, O Sleep, until You place upon my eyes, at will, The seal Aurora, ne'er, can break;-The seal to stay until I wake Within those Heavenly Courts Above, Where all is peace and joy and love!

LITTLE KEEPERS OF THE LIGHT

High, on a lonely headland,
Swept by the wind and snow,
Stands the Kerdonis Lighthouse
Kept by good Matelot;
There, when the fog hung heavy,
There, thro' the biting cold,
He trimmed the great lamp which shows the way
To the sailors brave and bold:

Once, when the day was dying,
(Chilly and raw, the air,)
Climbed the old lighthouse keeper
Over the winding stair,
Filling the massive lantern,
Then, when the task was done,
Descending the steps, he dropped down dead,
At the hour of setting sun:

While by his side, in sorrow,
Prayed Mother Matelot,
Bravely her two young children
Mounted the tower, in woe,
Trying to set in motion
Levers which moved the light,
But, failing in this, they took their turn
At it pushing, thro' the night:

Twenty times, each, they drove it, Counting awake to keep, Carl and Marie, his sister, (Youngsters in need of sleep,)
Up in that turret chamber,
Listing the breakers' roar,
And thinking of him they loved, below,
Who would, never, hark them, more:

Yet, in that lonely tower,
Hearing the billows dash,
Hearing the beating raindrops,
Hearing the blizzard's crash,
Yet, altho' cold and frightened,—
Hungry, (for, sup they'd none,)
They toiled, thro' long hours, the ships to save,
Till that fearful night was done:

Then, when they saw the dawning,
Carl, (ten years only,) crept
Down to his mourning mother,
(Who by his father wept,)
Asking if he and sister
Might from their toiling cease
And have, (now the ships were safe from harm,)
Just a bit of bread, apiece:

Seamen, who swam the ocean,
Near to the Belle Isle Light,
During that dreadful tempest
When that the waves rolled white,
Know ye what puny fingers
Turned the loved light for thee
To show you the spot where rocks lay hid
In that surging, seething sea?

Weak were those little fingers,— Fingers of children small, But, they performed their duty, (Up in that tower tall,) Duty to ev'ry sailor, Out on that awful night, And duty to one who slept below With a face so still and white!

Such is the stuff which fashions
Heroes of larger type,—
Heroes which make a nation,
When that the time is ripe,—
Heroes whose aim is only
Bravely to dare and do,
And, then, if it needs be, give their lives
When their noble work is thro!

'TWAS ON A SUMMER'S NIGHT

'Twas on a summer's night Among the pines sweet-scented, And Luna flung her light
At what she saw contented,
When, on a path
That climbed a rath,
(With wildflowers bright imbedded,)
A man and maid
Love's spell obeyed,
As it they slowly threaded:

Upon the youthful pair
Looked lovely loosestrife yellow,—
On him with curling hair,
(A tall and stately fellow,—)
On eyes so bright
With tender light,
(That Love or Luna lent them,)
As on they strayed,
All unafraid
Of sorrows, years since, sent them:

And, there, 'neath falling dew
And starlight faintly gleaming,
Love's story, old yet new,
He told the damsel dreaming;
Then, when they'd sealed
The love revealed
By kisses oft repeated,
With arms entwined,
Their vows to bind,
They o'er the road retreated:

Long years have passed away
Since, 'neath the moonlight beaming,
Those luckless lovers gay
Strolled, arm in arm, a-dreaming;
But, now asleep,
Where lichens creep
Around his headstone glooming,
The youth, as bold
As knight of old,
Lies low 'neath clover blooming:

And she, whose wealth of hair
Was like a crown of glory,
Hath lived to learn that care
Can turn its masses hoary;
Yet, when the night
Of her troth-plight
Returns, each year, a lassie
She stands, once more,
Her swain before,
Upon the hill-path grassy!

OH, LINGER, LOVELY SPRING!

Dear Mother Earth her mantle white hath shed,— That ermine cloak she's worn the season past; The snowy cap, which long concealed her head, She's cast to show her wind-blown locks, at last;

These wind-tossed tresses, now, are lightly bound With Mayflower garlands fragrant, frail and fair;

And o'er her ample breast is wrapped around Bright, glistening green, in texture, rich and rare:

Her sceptre, thro' the winter, gemmed with frost, Hath, now, become a willow wand most fine Upon whose hilt forgetmenots embossed With dainty dewdrops sparkling ever shine:

When magic staff is pointed towards the hills, (Whose crests are crowned with crystal coiffures white.)

That hour, is seen a million gleaming rills, In gleeful dance adown the slopes, in sight:

Wheree'er she treads, meek violets awake;— The crocus and the hyacinth upspring; Whene'er she smiles, the mountain torrents shake, And fling their froth as merrily they sing:

At mystic words she utters, wailing wind Gives place to gentle zephyr, on whose wing Is wafted incense sweeter than ye'll find In smoking censer swung where anthems ring:

And, then, the robins, happy in amours,
Their rippling notes trill, gayly, night and morn;
The Sun, with sweetest smile, to greenest meads
allures
Where scores of starry primroses are born:

Enchanting Spring, oh, change your vesture not! Your lovely, witching guise, forever, wear, For, when you smile, our sorrows are forgot; Our hearts, for love of thee, lose ev'ry care!

HE HEARD ALTHO' IN PRISON CELL

The sun behind the mountains high was sinking to his rest:

And gilded grew each wooded spur and rocky Alpine crest;

The valley, in whose bosom pure the windflower white did bloom,

At this late hour, in silence lay, close wrapped in purple gloom:

The veery and the hermit thrush their good night songs had sung,

When, down a darkening, forest path his footsteps lightly swung

A stripling page, of graceful mien, in velvet doublet blue.

Who brushed, with hasty feet, the moss already damp with dew:

He gained the road that climbed the steep on which a castle stood,

And thicker fell the shadows dark from out the rich, pine wood;

The massive pile, (with mosses, gray, but, clinging ivy, green,)

With turret-tower and battlement, by him was dimly seen:

Thro' slit-like casements cressets flared, and on his ear there broke

The clank of arms, of jingling spurs and many a ribald joke;

The moat, (at noon, a silver flood,) an inky chasm, yawned wide;

The drawbridge, like a hov'ring hawk, was raised o'er pitchy tide:

He heard the musk-rats scuttle fast along the wall

But, all was well; he'd have it so; he'd be, there, sole alone:

Above him rose the donjon tower; against the sky it frowned,

By light and shade, by sun and storm, and frost and age, embrowned:

Below the tower, behind the bridge, he thought he spied the keep,—

That loathsome vault, where, in their pain, brave captives sigh and weep;

He listened; no sounds more he heard except the screech-owl's yell,

Slow borne, (from yonder, darksome wood,) upon the west wind's swell:

A teardrop, for one second, shone in boy's clear eye of blue;

In a moment more, 'twas dashed to earth,—a precious drop of dew;

"Oh, might my Master hear, to-night, my last despairing cry!

Oh, might, from yonder pile, his voice I list in sweet reply!"

Then, on the evening air arose a soldier's war-song bold,—

The song his master used to love, in those dear days of old,

When he, a warrior strong and brave, the wily foe did meet;

Or, when in time of pleasant truce, he Saladin did greet:

The minstrel sang to music of his long-used, loved guitar;

When, hist! was that an angel's voice from yon, bright, shining star?

No! no! It was his master's voice responding to the song,—

The voice of Richard, of his King, the breezes borne along:

"He is not dead! In yonder cell he lives! Oh, God be praised!"

And, on his knees young Blondin sank, as eyes to heaven he raised;

"His curly head, no more, shall rest upon the floor of stone!

No more, shall reeking prison walls re-echo Richard's moan!

"No more, shall arméd sentries stand before his dungeon door!

No more, shall shackles chain his feet to a staple in the floor!

No more, shall bread and water be the food and drink of him

So kind of heart, so fair of face, and stout and strong of limb!

"For, soon, shall England's sturdy race know where its sovereign lies;

And, then, the donjon's slimy vault shall vent its peerless prize!

No matter what the ransom be, in silver or in gold, 'Twill all be paid by them who love dear, 'Lion Heart,' the bold!

"Before thee, on thy rightful throne, shall bow thy subjects true

To swear allegiance sweet to thee, ere many moons be new!

Then, rest thee, Master, in the cell where swordsmen stand on guard,

And sound be sleep which comes to thee, on filthy pallet hard!

"'Twill only be till Blondin's feet can reach old England's shore!

And fleet will be the horses' feet that bring the golden store!

We'll, never, rest till, safe, at home, our gallant King doth stand,

The bravest, noblest, best-beloved, young soldier in our land!"

THE SKYLARK'S PLEA

What ails thee, lovely creature Behind your gilded bars? Why droopest thou thy feathers? What is 't thy pleasure mars?

Why quaffest not the water In yonder fountain fair? Why tastest not the sweetmeats Those silver dishes bear?

Are not thy friends most tender?

Is not this house more grand
Than that in lonely meadow
Where roves the weasel band?

Ah! yes! I'm treated kindly; I've drink and sup to spare; This cage, wherein I languish, Is, doubtless, rich and rare;

But, oh, my little master, In spite of all your care, I'm, still, a wretched captive Who fain would breathe the air

Of far-off grassy meadow Which shelters cosy nest Where wifie wee is waiting With birdies 'neath her breast;

The bugs, gnats, worms and beetles, (I catch, each early morn,) Are sweeter than the dainties Your silver cups adorn;

The water of the brooklet
Is nectar, cool and sweet;
The forest breezes fan me,
When overcome with heat;

Then, when the sun shines brightly, I cleave the ether blue And sing to God true praises For mercies, old and new;

I bless the Lord for freedom;-

For day's clear, cheerful light; I pour my soul out, freely, As, up, I wing my flight;

The God, who gave me being, I thank for power to sing; For this and all His Goodness I chant, when on the wing;

And, now, my pretty jailer, I pray you, ope the door! Detain me not, in bondage, A prisoner, evermore!

And, while I mount, each morning, Towards yonder rising sun, I'll breathe a prayer, in music, For what, this day, you've done!

NUTTING

Ceased melodic music ringing,
For, the singers south are winging,
Who, in springtime, made our forests, all, so gay;
But, the jay and blackguard crow
Call out, now and then, their woe
To the cheery chickadee in garb of gray:

The swamp maples, of green color,
Which, by contrast, seemed, e'en, duller
In the presence of the tanager, so bright,
Are, now, clad in scarlet gay
As the robin's breast, the day
When he northward flew to fill us with delight:

Up the chestnuts, growing amber,
Now, the gleeful chipmonks clamber,
And the bouncing burs, with sharpest spines embossed,
Ev'ry hour, are dropping down
From some noble chestnut's crown,
Touched, these autumn eves, by fingers of the frost;

Many burs are just disclosing Sweetest nuts, therein reposing, Brown and shining as the silken locks of Jess, Who, in knitted jacket red, Watches Jack, (up, overhead,) Shaking down the nuts she catches in her dress:

Then, while 'neath the tree a-resting, Jack and Jess are gayly jesting, By another tree, a second pair we see,— Ruddy Rudolph, lithe of limb, And a lassie, neat and trim, Gath'ring up the nuts knocked down from off the tree:

And the sunlight falls, a-sparkling, On Ruth's lustrous eyes, a-darkling,

Where is couched a shaft from Cupid's bow, so true; When young Rudolph, good and wise, Looks, the first, with lover's eyes,

On the girl who glances up with orbs, deep blue;

And he thinks the burs, a-bounding
From the boughs above, are wounding
The big heart that beats so loudly in his breast;
But, the pain is put to flight

By those eyes, as dark as night, When the maid his palm, so pricked with spines, has pressed:

Oh, ye nutting days, so pleasant,
Might ye be, forever, present,
That a million Ruths and Rudolphs, like to these,
Might find out, before too late,
The pure love to ne'er abate
Till the frosts of fifty years hath turned the trees

To the crimson and the amber, Thro' which chipmonks slyly clamber

On the umbered bough, so soon, to be quite bare,—

When hath waned the harvest moon,

And the winter comes, too soon,

With its wailing winds and bleak and biting air!

ODE TO THE MOUNTAINS

Oh, Mountains, dear old Mountains, I love thee more and more!

As seasons come and vanish, I think I thee adore!

Like steeds that scent the battle and snort to join

the fray,
So, pants my soul, O Mountains, to see that dawn-

so, pants my soul, O Mountains, to see that dawning day

When I shall look, with rapture, upon thy charming face!
When I shall kneel, in rev'rence, thy fettered feet

t' embrace! When I shall climb thighs sturdy to reach thy ample breast,

Where I may lie, in quiet, and dream and write and rest!

When I shall scale thy forehead, and o'er it, joyful, lean

To drink Life's great Elixir,—the mountain breezes keen!

When I shall pluck the blossoms which bloom upon thy breast!

When I shall quaff the waters that leap adown thy crest!

When I shall bask in sunshine that creeps within thy heart!

When I shall gaze beneath me to see night-mists upstart!

When I shall crouch in grottoes beneath thy granite gown,

Whilst, (thunder-showers uprising,) the rain comes pouring down!

When I shall spy the eagles swoop, by thy bosom bare,

Towards yonder, lonely ledges to see how nestlings fare!

When I shall see the changing of magic light and shade,

And, too, behold the sunset's rare colors o'er thee fade!

O Mountains, dear old Mountains, reserve upon your breast

A place where I may ponder where I at last

A place where I may ponder!—where I, at last, may rest!

THE TEACHER

(Dedicated to my Friend, Miss Minnie V. Reid.)

She is gentle and modest;—retiring
As a thrush in the far greenwood fair,
Ev'ry talent in others admiring,
Tho' her own may be three-fold more rare!

She a teacher is, too, true and trusty, In a school of a populous town, Where she traineth the lads, lithe and lusty, With her eyes curbing caitif and clown!

In the dim, misty mornings, she wendeth
To the schoolhouse her footsteps, so light;
Marking manuscripts, patient, she bendeth
Till down-speedeth the shades of the night:

And, tho' worn is she, often, and weary, Yet, her voice is melodic and low, And her words are as pleasant and cheery As the breezes thro' pine-trees which blow:

Her brown hair, (with its colls neatly twining, Like a crown, o'er her pure, placid face,) Is, to-day, with soft threads silver shining, Adding much to her ladylike grace;

And an artist is she, more than clever, As her blackboards can, all, witness bear, Decked with writing and sketches, which, ever, Show her neatness, her skill and her care: With it all, she's a true, christian worker;— One who holds ev'ry pupil at heart; Be he either a toiler or shirker, In her thoughts he's an integral part:

Ah, my Friends, 'tis such sweet, faithful Teachers Who are making the men of to-day! They do more than the mothers or preachers Toward the forming of manhood, I say!

Pay them, well, for their service afforded! Their example of virtue and love Shall be gen'rously, some time, rewarded In the Kingdom of Light up Above!

THE OLD QUAY

Out in the waters, warm and bright, Of Alameda Bay, Shot the old quay, quite out of sight, (Most half a mile, they say:)

Rude was the mole and built for strength; 'Twas no fine work of art,—
Fashioned of wood throughout its length,
And, well, it bore its part:

Fair were its piers, at ebbing tide, In mossy mantles green, Bordered, along the water side, (And thousands were there seen,)

By dripping barnacles as bright As mermaids' nut-brown hair, When, in Aurora's ruddy light, They frisk on boulders bare:

High were the arches, rough but strong, And, far, far down below, Flowed the Pacific blue along, Lit up by rosy glow,

Day after day, of sunrise clear And sunset, just as fair; For, on this peaceful, peerless mere A hurricane is rare:

Well, I remember, when a girl,
Of scanning sapphire sea,—
Watching round piles the wavelets curl
And feeling zephyrs free;—

Listing the dirge, that never died, Of waters, chanted clear, As, round the timbers lapped the tide, Beneath me, yet, how near!— Hearing another plaintive song, (The song the seagulls sang,) Sang o'er their dear ones, loud and long; When sharp the rifles rang,

Leaving upon the fishy flood
A thousand feathers white,
Staining it red with martyrs' blood,
The blood of seabirds bright:

Naught cared the fowlers for the game; (The flesh was rank and strong;) Thus, were the huntsman more to blame For doing this great wrong;

Sport was their aim, their purpose sole, In shooting, by the score, Flocks of these gulls from off the mole Which made my heart ache, sore;

Child tho' I were, that gruesome sight
The song I carolled stilled,—
Chased from my soul the sweet sunlight,—
With gloom my bosom filled:

Far have I roamed from yon blue bay, With seagull feathers strewn, Yet, I remember, well, the lay,— The coronach, so lone,

Sung by the gulls of whitish gray O'er them,—their comrades slain, Shot, from the wharf, each sunny day, By cruel sportsmen vain!

SWEET PEAS

Purple and crimson, pink and white, Bunch of sweet peas, so fair, Know that you fill me with delight By your rich colors rare!—

By your faint fragrance wafting thro'
These, my poor rooms, so hot,
Making me dream of a good dame true
And her bright garden plot!

Tho' I have, never, seen her face, Never her voice have heard, Still, Blooms, you whisper of her grace And of her cheerful word!

Over the far-off hills I roam, (Over the hills of blue,) Into the pretty, cosy home Kept by this good dame true;

Firmly, I grasp the good dame's hand,— Gaze in her gentle eye,— Look on her vines, by breezes fanned, Trained on the netting high;

This is the place where you were born, Flowers, (purple, pink and white,)
Laden with dew, this very morn,
Ere it were scarcely light!

True, I'll not chide you, if you fade,— If you quite quickly die! Surely, you, Flowers, were never made, Here, in my vase to lie!

Better you love the garden wide, Where kindred blossoms bloom, At the good lady's cottage side, Where they the air perfume!

But, Flowers, I love you, and I'll bring Water, cool, fresh, for thee, If your sweet fragrance you'll but fling Out thro' these rooms for me!

THE TWO ANGELS

Night's shadows dun were falling fast, As, silently, two angels passed; On pinions bright they glided slow, Hand clasped in hand, to realms below:

They parted as they neared the earth, The first to present be at birth Of one,—the heir of countless gold And parent love to, ne'er, grow cold;

And, as the gentle mother lay
On pillows soft, at close of day,
She salw Life's Angel, clad in white,
Whose face beamed bright as morning light:

The other angel, at command Of mighty God, drew close at hand To him,—an agéd man, abed, Who turned and saw him near his head;

And, in his pain, he quaked at sight Of Death's dark Angel, at his right, Who, clothed in black from head to feet, Was one he, long, had feared to meet; But, soon, the angel stooped and laid His hand upon the man who made No effort to avoid him, now, For, gleaming on his beauteous brow,

(Beneath the mask that, then, dropped down,) He saw an everlasting crown; While on the seraph's face a light; Each moment, grew more fair and bright;

And from his lips he heard a sound
Which made him to that breast upbound;—
"You strove for joy! you found but strife!
You looked for death! you've, now, found Life!"

God grant Death's Angel for us all His sombre mantle may let fall To show a robe as bright and white As snow, new-fallen, 'neath starlight!

And, may his greeting, sweet and clear, From ev'ry heart remove all fear, And make us yearn to reach that Breast Where each may find an endless rest!

FRIENDSHIP'S FLOWER

(Dedicated to my Friend, Mrs. Charles Clark.)

The Flower of Friendship, ne'er, decays, Which, once, my heart hath cherished, But, blossoms on thro' frosty days When other blooms have perished:

Thro' winter's cold or summer's heat, From love it springeth lightly, Diffusing wide its fragrance sweet, And blooming, ever, brightly:

For six long years, within my heart It's bloomed for thee, my Dearie; And, tho' we're many miles apart, It, still, is bright and cheery!

In scorching drought or drifting snow The floweret seems to flourish, A tender love, alone, we know, It needs its roots to nourish;

And this it's, always, found in you, My old-time Friend, so cheery,— My Needham Neighbor, tried and true, In darksome days and dreary!

And, so, as dawns the coming year,

The joys, it doth engender,
Me tempt these lines to write you, Dear,
Thy life more glad to render!

RAMBLING THRO' THE WOODS IN WINTER

Ev'ry morn, thro' the short days of winter, With my beautiful collie, so gay,
(Whose brown eyes brightly shine
As they gaze into mine,)
I stroll on thro' the woods, bare and gray:

Bounding, nimbly, along a rude pathway,
(Fringed with pines, silver birch and oaks brown,)
Now, and then, he returns,
Full content when he learns
That my face wears no trace of a frown:

Now, he darts, with the speed of an arrow, 'Long the roadway, rough, frozen and bare; Now, he stops, pricks up ear, Scents the air, crisp and clear, For, he feels o'er his mistress a care;

And, when satisfied harm is not near us, Looks he up in my face, wagging tail, Just as much as to say, "Let's proceed on our way, And, remember, my love never'll fail!"

On a sudden, he shoots 'mong the bushes, Startling blue-jay and wee chickadee, Who give out a quick cry, As they far away fly O'er the woodland that borders the lea:

Oft, lone crows from their perch on the tree-tops, Roused by dog's tapping tread on leaves sere, Wildwood echoes awake, As, o'er brooklet and lake, Off they wheel, flapping wings in great fear;

And Fritz watches, a moment, their motions,
Then, rears tail and starts off at fleet pace,
Casting envious glance,
(As, with heat, now, he pants,)
At the brook in its hard, icy case:

Now, a squirrel, in search of sweet acorns, Gambols gracefully by o'er the way; While the sun in sky blue, (Decked with cloudlets a few,) Glints 'mongst boles of the birches, so gray: Ah, we wish for the coming of springtime;—
For the glorious summer, so fair,
When all Nature is dressed,
From low vale to hill crest,
In soft verdure and blossoms, most rare!

But, methinks, on a cold winter's morning,
When the hoar-frost gleams bright on the rind,
When the cock's shrill alarm,
From some neighboring farm,
Is borne, clear, to our ears, on the wind,

'Tis enjoyment most rich to bend footsteps
Thro' the aisles of some grand, woodland fane,
Where thick boughs, intertwined,
Give free vent to the wind,
As it sings, sighs, or sobs in its pain!

'Tis devotion, as well as a pleasure,
To tread, daily, these forest fanes blest,
Breathing life-giving air,
While our souls Upward fare
Towards that Bourne where worn way-farers
rest!

GRANNY SCRIPTURE

In a spot of clearing, (hardly more Than a blacksmith's brawny hands,) With dense woods behind and woods before, Grandam Scripture's cabin stands; Such a lonely looking, little shed, With loose, leaky shingles overhead!

Not a bouncing Bet or kingcup's gold Or a black-eyed Susan's grace Was there, there, to cheer this woman old Of the brown and furrowed face; Not a blossom found a cranny, there, Round this dreary dwelling cheap and bare!

Thro' a pasture, (one must cross to get From the highway to the hut,) I have ridden, in weather fair or wet, O'er a road of many a rut, Gazing out, across the grasses high, To her home beneath the summer sky:

'Twas on Sunday evenings, long ago, That I, oft'nest, here did hie, When the western sky was all aglow With its red and amber dye, And the splendor struck upon the pane Of this wretched cottage in the lane:

98

As we drew our rein before the door, Granny Scripture hobbled out, Taking from my palm the roll I bore,— (One week's washing 'twas, no doubt;) For, those hands, so hard, were used to work, And, at seventy, toil they didn't shirk:

In some cornfield you have smiled to see
A tall scarecrow proudly stand
With its garments by the zephyrs free
Round its wizened figure fanned;
And, if, once, you'd seen Dame Scripture's frame,
You'd have sworn it one and all the same:

But, altho' her form was stiff and bent, Yet, her gown of print was clean, And an air of decency it lent To her person gaunt and lean, As she stood before her hovel, there, In the summer evening's sultry air;

And, beyond her figure, thro' the door,
Whilst she chatted; I could see
That her crazy, warped, old kitchen floor
Was as clean as clean could be;
Tho' no time had she to flowerets rear,
Yet, no dirt could find a foothold, here!

A great, object lesson, long to last,
Was old Grandam Scripture tall,
And, altho' to her reward she's passed,
Yet, to-day, I see it all;—
It is this,—Tho' mean and poor our place,
Neatness lends to it a perfect grace!

FORSAKEN

In a house, at the end of the village,
(Where. once, King Hospitality reigned,)
Now, the Ghosts of Despair, Disappointment,
Ev'ry night, hold mad revel unfeigned;

At the hearth sits a lone, gray-haired woman, To whose face and whose figure doth cling The remains of a once, wondrous beauty About which minstrels, yet, well might sing;

And she starts, as she hears at the casement The faint sound of the rising night wind, For, first thought is that recreant lover Hath returned to his breast her to bind:

Then, she thinks of the chest, in the garret, Filled with garments of linen and lace; And the white, satin gown, (now, grown saffron,) She'd have worn with such dignified grace:

The tall tamaracks, guarding the gateway, Throw their shade o'er the quaint portico As they did when he raised the brass knocker, In those sweet, happy days, long ago;

While the pines whisper ceaseless condolence, As they stand swinging arms to the sky, To their desolate, downcast, old mistress, Who, for love, once, would death, e'en, defy;

But, her heart, (once, so loving and tender,)
Wears, today, iron armor so stout
That no eye can behold what she suffers;—
Can detect what her mind broods about;

Still, I know that her brain is nigh bursting, For, when chilly and raw is the air, I have seen her the portico pacing With white head to the elements bare;

And her face, (with its relics of beauty,)
Gave no sign that she saw passers-by,
Her blue eye, ('neath long lashes, so graceful,)
Ever, set on the far-a-way sky:

May she see, as she scans the high heavens, That fair Angel, with bliss-bearing wings, Who'll erase from her mind all remembrance Of the past and the torture it brings!

MEETING OF ANTONY AND CLEO-PATRA

Down the Cydnus, in the sunlight, Cleopatra's ship went sailing, At the stern, her royal banners In the truant breezes trailing;—

Galley's sails of silken purple, Boat embossed with gold a-flashing, Oars of silver and the rowers Keeping time to cymbals clashing;—

On a couch, (all gold bespangled,)
Resting on her cushions downy
Egypt's Queen, (in gown, so gauzy,)
Fanned by handmaids bright and browny,—

Fanned with peacock feathers gorgeous, As sweet incense rare is floating O'er the barge and banks surrounding, (Crowded with a people doting:) Can you see the dusky princess
When Mark Antony, so knightly,
Kneels, in loosely flowing toga,
Kissing gem-decked fingers lightly?

See you not the smile bewitching, As she speaks her greeting simple? Notice you the blushes spreading O'er her damask cheek a-dimple?

Then, her eyes, (those orbs, so lustrous,)
Gleaming under tresses wreathing;
Jewelled necklace, on her bosom,
Flames emitting at her breathing!

Ev'rything, which mind could muster, Ev'rything, that art could fashion, Cleopatra used to win him,— Used to rouse his heart's deep passion:

On that day, long since departed, Little thought the wily Roman In the woman, (there, before him,) He had found his mightiest foeman!

Little thought he life and honor
He should lose for Love and Beauty;
Little dreamed he for one woman
He'd forget the World and Duty!

Since that morning on the Cydnus, Cupid more with hearts hath sported; And he'll, thus, go on, forever, For, he, never, will be thwarted!

TO THE RIVER CHARLES

O River, rippling River, Which stalks, in majesty, By Watertown and Waltham, Thro' Cambridge, to the sea,—

Upon whose banks two poets

Have lived and sung thy praise,
Oh, let me, now, their follower,
A song to thee upraise!

Thou'rt just the same blue river That Lowell saw, each day, In boyhood's hours, at Elmwood, And, too, when old and gray!

Thou hast not changed, bright river, Since, on the bridge, at night, There stood that other poet A-battling for the right! The moon is, still, reflected
As clearly in thy wave
As when his heart was lifted
To Heaven from out the grave!

Thou smile'st not, now, more sweetly On Harvard, fair of fame, Than ere she won her riches, Her beauty and her name!

For, ne'er, dost thou distinguish Betwixt the rich and poor; Thy waters lave, thy breezes Kiss autocrat and boor!

Altho' the smoke of workshops, Now, taints thy salty air, Altho', instead of orchards, Brick blocks thy borders bear,

Thy wimpling wavelets, gayly, Still, sing their prattling song,— Sweet songs of love and freedom To all men which belong!

Dear River Charles, thou helpest
Us all to better be!—
To wear the same calm visage
'Midst gloominess or glee!

And, when we cross thee, River, (By the bridge above thy stream,) Let all, who look, see, plainly, The earnest features gleam

Of Longfellow, our Poet, Who found thine aid, that night, When life seemed scarce worth living, But, which, thro' thee, grew bright!

And, as we watch the shimmer Of waters, far and wide, We'll cast, like him, our troubles Beneath thy silver tide!

HOME, SWEET HOME

Home, sweet Home! No sweeter music Ever rang on listening ears! Home, sweet Home! Who hath not heard it, Making eyes to swim with tears?

Whether hut or princely palace, Naught it matters; 'tis the same; It's the spot that's won the title To the mystic, magic name! 'Tisn't sets of rarest china, Grand Old Masters' works of art, Gleaming glass or shining silver Which so charm each home-sick heart!

'Tis not floors of inlaid marble, Hangings soft of filmy lace; What is, then, the great attraction? 'Tis the patient Mother's Face!

'Tis the quiet air of comfort
That the happy homestead bore,
Where no vile disputes or discords
Entered at the open door!

'Tis because round Mother centered All that's purest, best in life; 'Tis because Home, never, harbored Greed, profanity or strife!

There, the fairest, smiling faces 'Twas no rarity to see;
There, the mildest, mellow voices
Made the sweetest melody!

'Twas a place whose merry inmates Wore no strange, dissembling masks; 'Twas a place where daily duties Pleasures were, but, never, tasks!

'Twas a spot whose mystic motto Was the winsome word, "Forbear!" Helping all o'er Life's rough rapids Into peaceful havens fair!

It's no wonder we all love it,—
This sweet shrine of early years!
It's no wonder we would wet it
With our truest, tend'rest tears!

When thro' mem'ry's mazy windings Stealeth thoughts of childhood's lot, Lo! sound strains of softest music,— "Home, sweet Home! Forget-me-not!"

SONG OF THE SURF

Like warriors marching on in line, (Helms decked with plumes of white,) Roll on the billowy waves of brine, In twilight's sombre light:

On, on they come with power and grace, In uniforms of blue, Their pennons, (fair as lavish lace,) E'er furled, but, ever, new:

Still, on, they come, with steady tread, A strangely beauteous band, And forward bends each crested head, Where lies yon stretch of sand:

With steps close locked and bayonets bare, Their foamy breath they fling, And, ever, on the evening air Is borne the song they sing:

No war-cry troll these warriors brave,— These soldiers of the sea; No paean rends the welkin's nave,— No shout of victory;

Now, soft and sweet, then, deep and clear, They chant a requiem low,— A solemn hymn which none can hear And higher thoughts not know;

A plaintive dirge is the surf's sweet song, That's sung for ev'ry wave Which dashes sandy shore along To find, thereon, its grave!

TO THE WHIPPOWILL

Oh, thou bird that sleeps, thro' the garish day, In the woods, on some boulder brown,— Who, in patience, waits to waft wide thy lay, When the shades of the night creep down,

Tho' I've, never, seen thy wide, bristled bill, Nor thy breast-band so broad and white, It hath been my fate to my heart feel thrill With thy notes, at the fall of night!

When come moonlit eves of the merry May, Thro' the forests, so lately brown, I, in fancy, hear thy sweet, plaintive lay, Tho' compelled to remain in town:

And, I, once again, am a new-made bride, (In a huge, rambling farm-house old,) Sitting close to casements which open wide Over meadow and wooded wold;

And I hear, once more, 'mong the lilacs tall
Thy sad strains, echoed loud and long,
As I lean my head 'gainst the windowed wall,
All the better to list thy song;

Ah, I know that insects of gauzy wing Are coquetting and dancing, there, And I know you seize them while, still, you sing That strange, sorrowful, solemn air!

Oh, pray, say, dear bird, what is't means thy lay, When you sing, "Whip-poor-will!" at night? Do you bear such grudges, these eves of May, That poor Will to the lash is dight?

Hath he nestlings stole or seduced thy mate, That you, still, thro' the gloaming fair, (On swift, noiseless wing,) till the hour is late, With thy wail fill the scented air?

Say! who is this Will you would have chastised, Modest birdling, do tell us, now! He a scamp must be to be so despised By as bashful a bird as thou!

THE MAGIC MISTLETOE

On the eve of each Christmas, so joyous,
(When the ox, say they, kneels in his stall,)
When the lights from the famous, old Yule-log
Shadows cast on the living-room wall,

Chandeliers are festooned with sprays graceful Of the famed, magic mistletoe rare That the lads may catch sweethearts beneath them And warm kisses imprint on their hair:

Prithee, list, oh, fond youths and fair maidens, After plighting your troth 'neath the bough, To the tale of yon beauteous garland Drooping low o'er you, sealing your vow!

In the days of the Celts, rude but sturdy, Who the Island of Britain controlled, Ere the eager, victorious legions, Under Cæsar, that shore did behold.—

When these warriors, so savage and warlike, In their chariots, (drawn by trained steeds,) Deadly fear to the souls of the Romans Introduced by the dint of brave deeds,

There abode in oak woods, esteemed sacred, Which were watered by clear, running streams, Scores of powerful priests called, "The Druids," Whose religion most cruel, now, seems:

Far within those green groves were enclosures Which were circled by walls of rough stone, And, amid these huge, circular spaces Were great altars, still, standing alone;

On these altars, (we moderns term cromlechs,)
Human victims were offered up, oft,
To appease their false gods of religion,
Who, the Celts thought, frowned down from
aloft;

In those groves British boys were instructed By the priests, (sole preceptors of youth,) And remained in the depths of the forest, For long years, seeking wisdom and truth;

These poor pupils were taught by their teachers
That the oak God loved best of all trees,
And whatever was found growing on it
Came from Heaven, His loved people to please;

So, whenever the mistletoe berries
Were found clust'ring an oak-tree around,
They especially sacred were looked on
By the person by whom they were found;

In the month we call March, when the Britons Their New Year used to celebrate bright, Was the day set to seek the plant holy With great pomp and druidical rite;

A procession, in splendor and grandeur, Neared the oak, bearing green parasite, When a priest, (in his spotless, white vestments,) Climbed the tree in the woodland's dim light;

With a knife, made of gold, cut he branchlet Which was caught by another priest wise, Holding high the loose folds of his tunic To receive the fair mistletoe prize;

So revered was the plant parasitic,
'Twas considered too holy, by far,
To be touched but by priests' hallowed garments;
(Its wax berries their fingers might mar;)

Those dark years superstitious are ended, Yet, in these most enlightened of days, There remains a slight relic barbaric Of the Druids' strange customs and ways,

When we hang over lintel and mantel The uncommon, and mystical vine, (To which, still, is ascribed latent forces,) The rare mistletoe, true lovers' sign.

SNOWFLAKES

They come from the clouds, gray and gloomy;
They come when the sun's hid his face;
In thick, serried array,
They advance on their way
Towards the earth, at a quickened pace:

At sound of that clarion bugle,

(The voice of the shrilly North Wind,)

They keep step to the note,

As they gracefully float

Thro' the atmosphere, chill, unkind:

Their march, altho' noiseless, is steady;
Their duty they know and it do,
Deep enshrouding the ground,
(Tho' in silence profound,)
With an ermine-like mantle new:

They yield to but few forces mighty;
Invincible, ever, they stand;
They surrender, alone,
To two powers, well-known,—
The South Wind and the Sun God bland:

And, so, when Apollo, benignly,
The clouds parts asunder, in glee,
Ev'ry snowflake's face gleams;
Full of joy each one seems
To retreat from a foe such as he;

For, mildness and love melt their armor
As fire does bright silver and gold,
And their phalanxes white,
Fast, fade out in the light
That is shed by great Helius bold!

LINES TO NIGHT

The night hath come, and are creeping Shadows dark o'er this earth of ours To rest tired eyes while sleeping Thro' the long, silent, midnight hours:—

The night, so calm and so fitting
To bring rest to the weary brain,—
To set ev'ry thought a-flitting
Which bears grief in its troubled train!

The gale, which shrilly hath shouted Thro' the treetops, hath sunk to rest; The surge, (that, all day, hath spouted,) Lies asleep on old Neptune's breast! The world's great work no more's pressing; All the duties of day are o'er; The Peace of the Lord, in blessing, Crowns the dwellers of sea and shore;

And care and coil, which encumber, Fold their wings, now that's done the day, Like swifts sinking down to slumber After chatt'ring their noisy lay!

While starlight brightly is beaming, And Diana bends out her bow, I sit in my chair a-dreaming Of the loved ones of long ago:

I see a baby a-dancing
In the arms of his mother fair,
Her eyes in his face a-glancing
As she kisses his golden hair;

His arms extending, the darling Lisps, "Aunt Dody!" so sweet to me, His eyes, (bright as those of the starling,) Brimming over with childish glee!

I spy, once more, other faces
Bearing not any sign of years
Nor showing the slightest traces
Of life's tumult or toil or tears;

And, then, I hear, (softly stealing,)
The sweet sound of a boyish voice
Which falls on mine ear with healing,
As it warbles a player's choice;

I see the player quite clearly,
His blue eyes gently closed to hear
The lad whom he loves too dearly,
Being restless without him near!

I breathe, again, mountain breezes Wafted in thro' my cottage door; I list to the strain which pleases, And I, also, am young, once more!

Dear Night, (dark robes, ever, wearing, Clasped by clusters of many a star,) A Herald art thou a-bearing Voices sweet from my Friends afar!

I'm glad you, Night, come so often With fond mem'ries my heart to twine,— All pains in my breast to soften With the scenes of the auld lang syne!

WHERE TO FIND GOD

By the listening ear the Almighty's Voice Is as plainly heard, today, As from out the Bush His Tones Moses knew, In those ages passed away!

In the thunder's roar and the wintry blast, In Niagara's whirlpool white, In the seething surf of old ocean grand We may hear His Voice of Might!

In the stirring song of the shy sky-lark, In the coo of turtle-dove, In the cheerful chirp of the katydid All may list His Words of Love!

By observant eyes His transcendent Smile May be seen, today, as clear As on Tabor's height, in those olden days, It illumed Christ's face, so dear!

In the azure sky, in the star-lit dome, In Diana's silvern beams, In the setting sun, ('mong clouds opaline,) God's fair Face with glory gleams!

In the rose that low hangs its blushing face, (While its cheek soft zephyrs woo,)
In the lily holding its chalice up
To be filled with purest dew,—

In the limpid mirror of mountain lake, (Which reflects the hills around,) In the breezy breath of the brawling brook The Lord's smiles and words abound!

To the eye which sees and the ear which hears
Our Creator Good is near,
Utt'ring words of peace, deepest love, and truth,
Ev'ry day, throughout the year!

SONNET TO A SKELETON

That rattling structure, hanging there, Was clad, of yore, in garments rare;— Could walk and work, could think and love, And worship Him,—its God, Above!

Within that skull, (now, bleached and white,) Once, dwelt a brain of wondrous might,—A mechanism scarce understood By any, e'en, the wise and good!

Inside its portal, once, there swung That organ strange, (we call the tongue,) Which had the power to move to tears, To rouse to ire, relieve from fears!

Where, now, those orbits glare at me, A pair of eyes, erst, danced in glee, Or wept, maybe, at others' woe; We can not tell; none, now, can know!

Those dangling feet, (of old, encased In shoon or sandal,) ran in haste, Perchance, some foe despised to save Who, now, lies peaceful in his grave!

These hands, which all are fain to shun, Earth's noblest work, may be, have done; And glad we'd, once, have been had they But on our heads in blessing lay!

O bony Skeleton, so bare, E'en clothed in tissues pure and fair, We, even, then, would flinch to be In contact close, I swear, with thee!

Tho' roses red should blush, to-day, Where cheek bones bare hold ghoulish sway; Tho' orbs of blue should sparkle bright From out those caverns, deep and white;—

Tho' feet should dance, and hands should play, And tongue should sing a roundelay, And, with the song the heart should beat In cadence to the music sweet,

One thing would, still, be lacking, yet, Which, Human Framework, you forget,— The Mind, the Soul, we can not see, Enthroned within thy breast must be!

The Mind, which ev'ry act directs And nothing for thy good neglects; The Soul, that's given to, ne'er, decay,— Which marks the man from yonder clay!

INSTINCT

The beaver builds his dam of sapling trees,
On summer nights, when softly soughs the breeze;
The bee her waxen cell with honey fills,
In fields and pastures fair,
While balmy is the air,
And mellow sunshine gilds the distant hills:

The fire-bird weaves her purse-like, pensile nest, And fastens it where safe her young may rest

104

On bending bough, while clust'ring leaves above,
A-rustling in the wind,
The baby birds remind
Of bullables their mother sings in love:

The mole constructs her gall'ries 'neath the ground, Those winding ways where noxious grubs abound, The bed for brood, (which, once a year, is born,) Made soft with grasses warm,

Where each wee, helpless form
Sleeps, safe from foes, from early dusk till dawn:

The caterpillar wraps him in his shroud,
Then, glues it to a branch, while leaden cloud
Gives place, some morn, to paradise-like spring;
And, then, the loathsome worm,
(Now, past his earthly term,)
Is seen a gorgeous butterfly, a-wing:

Each autumn, birds of passage soar on high,
When harvested are barley, corn and rye,
To wing their way to southern climes more fair,
Where spicy zephyrs blow,

And, 'stead of chilling snow, Rare roses fill with fragrance sweet the air:

Far off, on ocean's ever heaving breast,
The stormy petrels skim the curling crest,
And warn the sailors of the tempest near
By flocking vessels nigh
And utt'ring loud a cry,
As tho' each deemed himself a feathered seer:

When winter's reign, so stern, is almost o'er, (Tho' March on blaring bugles, yet, doth roar,) The trees and shrubs begin to forth push buds, Incased in shining brown.

With linings soft of down,

Quite sure that Spring is riding on the floods:

Dear Reader, have you ever given thought To hang-bird, bee or mole which God hath taught To fabricate, (in ways for each the best,)

A home where offsprings dear Securely it may rear, While summer suns in splendor paint the west?

Hast wondered at the instinct, strange to see, In caterpillar or the budding tree, Which tells the first in snug cocoon to lie,—

The last to forth put leaves, (And, seldom, it deceives,)
Tho' wailing winds, ofttimes, it doth defy?

Hast marvelled how it is that birds can know When it is time to leave the line of snow, Before a flake hath dimmed the sapphire sky?

Or how the petrel sees
The storm, from which he flees,
While, yet, the sun shines, clear and bright, on high?

To me 'tis plain that God, (who made them all,— Each living, earthly creature, great or small,) Implanted in the breast of ev'ry one A monitor of might

A monitor of might
To teach him wrong from right
And guide him safely on till life is done!

SPONDULYX

His old suit was soiled and shabby, Of a texture thin and cheap, And his coat hung loose and flabby From his shoulders' drooping sweep;

On his grizzled locks dishevelled Sat a hat of straw, once white, Thro' whose rents the breezes revelled In their mazy dances light;

Down his tangled beard flowed, streaming, A tobacco rivulet; And two faded eyes gazed, beaming, 'Neath their bushy brows that met

O'er a nose which much resembled The bald eagle's beak so strong, And his tongue, it never trembled In its jabber harsh and long;

A small sack of greasy leather In his smutty hands he bore, Trudging on, in ev'ry weather, Thro' the streets, from door to door,

Begging leave to scissors sharpen
Or a razor's blade to hone,
And I've, often, paused to hearken
To his prating words and tone,

As he sat him down, a-sighing, Pulling out his pate a hair, (Ev'ry burnished blade a-trying,) Till his scalp was nearly bare;

Old Spondulyx men had dubbed him, And the nickname did he hear Till the epithet appalled him, Tho' he simple seemed and queer; Glad was he if pennies fifty
In his purse he found, at night,
Sleeping sound as tradesmen thrifty
Till the dawn of rosy light,

"Trusting," so said he, "to-morrow, Half a dollar I may earn That of none I'll have to borrow To the kitchen fire make burn!"

Old Spondulyx, never, lazy Could they call you, e'en, in jest! Poor Spondulyx, queer and crazy, Slack and slovenly, at best,

All thy trials, now, are over! All thy toiling, too, is done! Thou, no longer, art a rover Strolling on from sun to sun!

He, who heedeth when a sparrow
Falls from out the sky of blue,
He a bed hath given thee, narrow,
'Neath the stars and falling dew!

MEMORIES

As my eyelids droop, ere to sleep I fall, The old farmhouse, girt by its rock-built wall, I can plainly see, as in by-gone days, When I thought it theme for a poet's lays; I can see the kitchen with ceiling low And its clean-swept hearth in the sunset glow; I can hear the clock, on the well-warped floor, Ringing out its harmony, evermore; I, again, in rev'ry, on settle sit, (Built beside the door, in a niche to fit,) And, once more, I smell the strong perfume sweet Of the lilacs, near to my falt'ring feet, As I tread the doorstone, o'ergrown with moss, Over which an elm-tree's huge branches toss; Then, I laugh aloud at the colt, new-born, On the turf a-frisking, one pleasant morn; Merely head and legs did he look to me, Gamb'ling round and round 'neath you spreading

(In the dooryard's centre,) a noble elm,
Like a giant coiffed in his pluméd helm;
For a hundred years, silent sentinel,
The fair homestead old it hath guarded well;
On the seat, that circles its massy bole,
Each young heir hath sat as a kiss he stole
From the winsome lass that he made his wife,
Who, in turn, hath mistress been, here, for life:
The rough, rambling barn, with its hay-mows wide,
Is from farmhouse old but an ample stride;

On its western side, thro' a postern door I have watched the sheep, like a whirlwind, pour, When from off the hills, (their loved pastures

They'd been driven by dogs or a fox, I ween: In the times of drought, when the well went dry, To the spring, below, did we young folks hie, With unfeigning hearts, at the close of day, Leading down to drink ev'ry faithful bay: In the meadow, north of the dwelling neat, I can see the mower, with movement fleet, From his seat spring down as he caught in cap Rabbit wild he laid on my girlish lap,-A poor, trembling creature I, soon, set free To leap off, in joy, o'er the grassy lea: I remember days when the fields were sweet With long swaths of hay 'neath the reapers' feet;-When the dome above, so deep blue and bright, Quickly grew as black as the darkest night;-When the thunder rolled and the lightning played, And, for fear of rain, we were all dismayed; It was, then, to aid the haymakers tanned That the women, all, to the rescue banned; Oh, how hot and tired and dusty, too, Were we all when th' arduous toil was thro'! But, a wash in the spring's clear water cool Made us fresh as nymphs of the reedy pool, Quite prepared to go for the cows, at night, Which came shaking their bells in the dusky light:

The old farmhouse white, with its lilacs fair, (Where, in spring, the whippowills sad repair,) To the hands of strangers, long since, hath passed, And I wonder, oft, if the chambers vast, Now, resound to the tread of the phantom feet Of the sires and sons and their consorts sweet, Who, for generations, held, here, mild sway, In a plain, tho' quite independent, way; And I, sometimes, wonder, (if I could look On the bubbling spring and the babbling brook,) If I'd these find mourning the changes, there, In the mansion old 'neath the elm-tree fair; Yes, they mourn, I think, and in song bemoan Ev'ry dear, old friend who hath left them lone; But, I'm sure the elm, with his feath'ry crest, Will the strangers shield, when they sink to rest, Murm'ring soft and low when the evening breeze Plays a requiem sad on his thousand keys; But, in storms, low-bending his helméd head, As he groans aloud for his long-lost dead:

Ancient Elm, may long, you the homestead shield

From the blasts fierce blowing o'er fell and field! And, as gray you grow with the clinging moss, And, as higher and wider your limbs you toss, Oh, forget not those of your kith and kin Who to Heaven's Sweet Peace, now, have entered in!

HOW A SPIDER MADE HISTORY

Crouching upon his heap of straw, Down in a dungeon dreary, Smilingly, once, a prisoner saw, Sad as he lay and weary,

There, in his cell's cold corner bare, Spinning her web of labor, What to his eyes was, oh, how fair! Just a wee, spider neighbor!

Watching for her, each dawning day, Soon, the poor captive pining Learned that Miss Spider, always, lay Close in her house if shining

Were not the weather and quite warm; So, as he her watched purely, In a short time, a frost or storm He could predict most surely:

Now, whilst Dis Jonval, in his cell, Weather signs closely studied, O'er the wide swamp-lands, sudden, fell Troops of the French; but, flooded,

Soon, were these lands by stronger foes, Still, than the famed French Army; Over the crops, arranged in rows, Rushed blue, old Ocean balmy;

Cut were the dykes by Dutchmen brave, Hoping in waters foaming Frenchmen would find an instant grave Who o'er their fields were roaming:

Pichegru counted on the cold;— Looked for the dykes, this season, Solid as stone, the sea to hold; But, for the strangest reason,

Summer, still, lingered o'er the land, When it should be, e'en, freezing; Naught but retreat was left his band, Tho' it were so unpleasing:

News of the Frenchmen's sorry plight Learned the old prison keeper, And, when he made his rounds, that night, Brusquely he roused the sleeper,

Telling him Frenchmen must retreat, Soon, o'er the Dutch Land border,— Fly, with the wings of eagles fleet, Homeward, in dire disorder:

Quickly, Dis Jonval upward rose; After a bit reflecting, Wrote he a note in simple prose, Which, smiling, unsuspecting,

Took the old turnkey, sending it Off to the Frenchman Leader, Finding him sad, but, full of grit, As knows so well my reader;

Pichegru read the lines which told, Taught by a spider tiny, He, in his cell, was sure the cold Soon, would make ice, so shiny;

Pichegru heeded well his friend; Patiently he awaited, And, ere a week was at its end, Down fell the frost belated;

Over the swamps, (with ice grown hard,) Over the richest regions, Up to old Utrecht's Gates, ill-starred, Marched France's laughing legions!

Yes, Utrecht fell, and all because Wisely one leader harkened,— Harked to his friend and a spider's laws Learned in a dungeon darkened!

GODSPEED

On a gorgeous day, in autumn,
When the leaves began to turn,
And the goldenrod and aster
Dreamed beside the smiling burn,—

When the sky was blue and cloudless,— When the air, so cool, distilled That sweet, restful, peaceful quiet Which has, always, ennui stilled,

That a band of friends had gathered At the Hermit Poet's home,— In the garden were assembled, 'Neath high heaven's wide-spreading dome; By hydrangea bush, (the poet, Once, so loved,) a table stood, On which gentians, (fav'rite flowers Of the modest Quaker good,)

Loving lay, while chairs and benches Round the twain, in love, were placed, Where were seated friends devoted Of the Singer peaceful-faced;

Many Quakers there were present, (Some in sober garb,) beside A large circle of acquaintance Of beliefs diversely wide;

There was no display of sadness; Naught of grief or woe was there For the fullness, richness, sweetness Of that life so wondrous rare;—

Just the sense of loss at missing Gentle words and tender ways Of the one who, then, was singing, Up Above, his sweetest lays;

There was neither prayer or music; Whoso willed rose up and spoke Recollections, kind and loving, Which the thought of him awoke;

Then, to crown the simple service, A good friend, by true love led, Whittier's best and grandest poem,— "The Eternal Goodness," read;

That was all, but, 'mong those gathered There were none who were not glad They'd a chance to pay devotion To the, once, bare-footed lad

Who had driven his cows to pasture As he read from Nature's Book; Who had found his purest pleasure Culling blossoms by the brook,

As he listened to the stories
That the smiling streamlet sung,
Standing, there, beneath the willows
Which above the brooklet hung:—

Wondrous tales he set to music, As he sowed the seed, at dawn;— As he raked the hay in windrows, In the sultry, summer morn:

Whose great heart o'erflowed with kindness

For the helpless and the weak; Who was, ever, grandly striving Highest good for man to seek;

But, who, then, the path was treading Which to Life and Joy doth lead, And to which these friends, so earnest, Came to bid the Bard, "Godspeed!"

What a joyous one,—that service, For the Poet, Gone Before, With whom hoped they, soon, to cluster Round the God they all adore!

THE DANCE OF DEATH

Black clouds, (like demons, cloaked and cowled,)
Were scudding 'cross the sky;
Along the moor the night-wind howled,
As, fast, he scampered by:

From out the storm-clouds, dark and dun, The moon revealed Her Grace For one short second, just in fun, Then, hid her laughing face;

But, soon, the night-wind played a tune, So clear and weird and sweet, That ev'ry demon, 'round the moon, Danced off his Love to greet;

Diane, entranced, now, wore a smile,— The rarest ever seen, For, (far below her, mile on mile,) Upon the moorland green,

The fallen leaves, like spirits lithe, Bowed low in loved quadrille, Or, danced a stirring hornpipe blithe Beside the foaming ghyll;

Each cavalier was gayly dressed
In amber, bronze or gold;
Each lady wore her gown,—the best,
Rich red in sweeping fold;

They knew to-night would be the last, On earth, they'd ever dance, But, still, they bowed before the blast, And joy lit up each glance;

The louder piped the night-wind by, Along the meadow's breast, The faster seemed the leaves to fly On towards their endless rest: When morning light broke bright and clear, Upon the moorland wide, There, lay the leaves, (bent, brown and sere,) Just where they drooped and died;

No longer gleamed red doublets bright In graceful, shining fold, For, dull grew gowns when ebbed the light From out each heart of gold!

How glad, my Friends, should you and I Be when of this we think,— We mortals, when we come to die And stand on Jordan's brink,

The clothes we wear, howe'er so bright, We'll change for those more fair, And crowns to never fade or blight In Heaven's enchanting air!

Then, like the leaves, let's whirl along And dance our Dance of Death, With hearts more glad, more full of song, Till sped is latest breath!

WATCH

'Twas a rambling, country farmhouse
O'er which wind and storm had swept,
And the elms, (that overhung it,)
Constant vigil o'er it kept;—
In the winter, when the sunset
Glazed the western panes with gold;—
In the summer, when the shingles
Wore a mantle green of mould;—

In the spring, when wooing swallows
Glued their nests to chimneys square;—
In the autumn, when the asters
Made the meads with azure fair:
And, within, thro' ev'ry season,
Whether sun or storm held sway,
It was, always, sunny weather,
Always, gladsome, merry May:

There, at peace with God and mortals,
Dwelt the parson and his wife,
Like two woodland pigeons joyous
Mated happily for life;
And, behind dear Aunty Adams,
(At her housework, here and there,)
Like a shadow followed closely
Watch, a cur of coarse, black hair:

Now, one springtime, on a visit To the parsonage repaired One of old Aunt Charlotte's sisters
With two grandsons sunny-haired;
Thro' the long, bright days, the children
Romped, for hours, with Watch, so true,
'Neath the elms where sang the robins,
Or by brooks where flags waved blue:

Then, there came the time, when, sadly,
They must leave this pleasant place;—
They must hie to city quarters,
And forlorn grew each young face;
But, (the morning of departure,)
Kind Aunt Charlotte all made gay,
For, to John and little Willie
Gave she dear, old Watch away!

Many miles, in car and carriage, Rode the children, in delight, Reaching not their home in Worcester Till the sun had set in night; Then, their tired eyes in slumber Closed till daylight broke, at last, When they went to seek the playmate In the yard they'd tied so fast:

Gone was Watch, and not rewarded Was the careful search they made In the house, the street, the garden, 'Till the twilight hour did fade; And the two gay, gold-haired urchins Went to bed with heavy eyes At the thought they'd lost, forever, Him they deemed a perfect prize:

Some six Sundays after losing,
Dear, old Watch, Aunt Charlotte lay
Snug in bed, at early morning,
Just before the peep of day,
And she thought she heard a whining,
On the porch, by shuttered door,
So, she slipped her feet in slippers,
For, no cry could she ignore:

When she reached the long piazza,
There, she saw, as dawned the light,
Dear, old Watch, upon the door-mat,
In a sorry, sickening plight;
Ev'ry paw was torn and bleeding;
Like a phantom dog he seemed,
Tho' he wagged his tail in welcome,
And his eyes with gladness gleamed;

Almost starved lay he before her, With not strength enough to rise, Lapping feebly, tho', her fingers,
Gazing up with glassy eyes;
Like a baby Auntie raised him
In her kind, protecting arms,
Bore him gently to the kitchen,
And, with healing, home-brewed balms,

Bound his wounded feet in linen;—
Gave him draughts of milk, so sweet,
Making him a couch, most downy,
'Neath the southern window-seat;
And her tender eyes grew tearful,
As she patted Watch's head,
Telling him he'd stay, forever,
With her, there, till one lay dead;

For, she'd learned, at last, how faithful Poor old Watch's heart must be When he'd travel, footsore, weary, Starved and sick, o'er vale and lea, For six weeks, in storm and sunshine, That his mistress he might find! Surely, she would shield him, always, Grew he feeble, deaf or blind!

Years passed by, and, there, in comfort,
Lived the loving, dear, old dog;—
In the summer days, a-sleeping
By the threshold, like a log;—
In the winter time, a-lying,
Close, the clean-swept hearth beside,
Dreaming of some youthful frolic
On the grassy moorland wide;

Tho' his jaws grew, well-nigh, toothless, Tho' he quaked in ev'ry limb, Tho' his bark was hoarse and husky, Tho' his eyes grew dull and dim, Yet, he judged it, still, his duty Near to stay to loved household,—Still, to guard his gentle mistress, Who, like him, was growing old:

But, one windy night, in autumn,
When the gale the leaves whirled high,
Setting ev'ry one a-dancing
Towards the gloomy, leaden sky,
Dear, old Watch's soul was loosened
From the ills, (which sore him pressed,)
And, he, now, lies 'neath the elm-trees,
With the turf above his breast!

VISIT OF THE WOODPECKER

A woodpecker downy comes, here, ev'ry day,— A woodpecker, hearty and hardy, In black and white jacket and vest whitish gray, A cap on his nape of a bright scarlet gay, And, ne'er of a morn, is he tardy:

He comes, from afar in the dark forest old, On wings which are sturdy and steady, And, many a morn, thro' the winter so cold, The bluejay, (that robber so ruthless and bold,) To fight him seems willing and ready:

He comes for the fat I have tied to a tree, (A tidbit, this weather, that's frozen,) A morsel the junco and wee chickadee And, even, the rude robber bluejay are free To take any time that is chosen:

And, there, on the tree's rugged bark doth he cling, Propped up by each rigid, tail feather, While, swiftly, to left and to right, doth he fling His chisel-like bill from which, never, doth ring A note, this severe, wintry weather:

But, often, my woodpecker downy, so dear, (To pay for the suet him given,)
Hangs, long, to the tree, in the air sharp and clear,
To hunt for the larvae of insects I fear
Are hid in the bark, rough and riven:

And, with him comes, daily, his wee, modest mate, (No bright scarlet cap her adorning;)
She wears a plain, black one, for, ahl 'tis her fate;
But, fully contented is she with her state,
And, so, up betimes, each cold morning,

In yonder, decayed, hollow, gray, forest tree,
(Where they have the season been spending,)
She lets all her housework, so arduous, be,
And comes with her handsome, young husband to

To get the light lunch I am lending:

No song of their gratitude trill they, today, But, soon, in the spring which is coming, I'm sure I shall hear downy woodpecker gray In yon, darksome forest, so far, far away, On resonant branches a-drumming:

"And, why," do you ask, "does he drum, all day long,

When warm grows the weather and cheerful?" Because, little Boys, 'tis the woodpecker's song; And, don't, oh, I pray you, him do any wrong! Of that I am, always, quite fearful!

Well, there, in the hole he has chiseled away,
(In the bole of the tree where he's drumming,)
The nest you may find of the woodpecker gray,
And, hov'ring upon it, his modest mate, gay
Because of the babes that are coming!

And thousands of insects, which injure the trees,
Will catch the dear woodpecker downy
To feed the six babes, soon, to lie at their ease
'Neath wings of their mother, when soft is the
breeze.

At home in the tree-trunk so browny!

THE BROOK

On top of yonder mountain,
With night-cap gleaming white
It doffs, in spring,
When throstles sing,
I, first, saw earth's loved light:

Adown the rocks I gamboled, (A silver ribbon bright,) A-babbling loud, And feeling proud I'd run from such a height:

I rolled the pebbles roughly;—
A brawling ditty sang;
O'er rocks I roared
Which gashed and gored
My form, while thunders rang:

O'er dizzy cliffs I tumbled With foaming, flashing tide Spread like a veil Of a bride, so pale, The crag's dark face to hide;

And, just before the gloaming, When skies were rosy red, In sunset rays My filmy haze Wore rainbow hues, 'tis said:

And, soon, I smiled at wagtails, Who, 'mong my pebbles gray, Tripped on to snatch Of gnats a batch, Ere died the gorgeous day: Above me firs moaned sadly
To see, as sank the day,
A huntsman bold,
Within the wold,
A stag of beauty slay:

I peeped thro' ferny coverts; I glanced 'twixt banks of green Where blue-flags nod 'Bove boggy sod, And pitcher-plants are seen:

Then, down a slope I sparkled And dimpled in the sun; Thro' woods I crept 'Where shadows slept; Next, like a modest nun,

I wandered 'long a valley
'Mong hazy hills which lay,
Where, at my feet,
A lake lay, meet
To mirror man or fay;

Here, in its peaceful bosom, Fore'er to rest, I bide, And stars, at night, A twinkling light Shed o'er my glassy tide:

At morn, comes sunlight glancing To kiss my shining breast; And swallows cry, As o'er they fly, But, never, stop to rest:

At times, from sombre cloudlets
The rain comes pouring down,
And pelts my face
Without the grace
Of noticing my frown;

But, soon, the sun glints shyly
From out the brightening sky;
My gown's dull hue
Grows bright and blue
At the smile of God, on High:

I cannot be unhappy,
Tho', sometimes, it is true,
I'd dance, once more,
On the shingly floor
Of far-off mountain blue!

MISS MYERS

Beside the Charles's sedgy shore, Hard by the railroad track, Lived one, on earth, I'll see no more, Tho' I could turn me back

To when that I, a child of ten, With hair in tangled curls, Was taught by her to wield the pen, With other boys and girls:

Within a rose-wreathed cottage small, (Embosomed 'mongst the trees,) Throughout whose cosy, entrance hall, With perfume, swept the breeze,

There dwelt with her a mother old, A younger sister dear, And brother, gay Leander bold, She succored, many a year:

Here, 'neath the trees, at close of day, When done were duties all, She watched the sprite in hodden gray Curl out the smoke-stack tall

Of engine strong which drew the train The iron rails along, A-trolling out, in sun or rain, Its rumbling, rattling song:

At night, when thro' the dark she peered, On river's farther shore, She saw the street-lights, wan and weird, Her sleepy eyes before:

But, when the faultless June came round With bud and bird and bee, How red with fruit gleamed grassy ground Beneath her cherry tree!

And, then, it was my chum and I Were asked to supper, there,— The lovely, luscious fruit to try And other dainties rare;

And, when we'd eaten all we could, We climbed the mammoth swing, And, pushed by gay Leander good, How loud our shouts did ring!

Then, when old Sol the distant spire, (At sunset's hour, so fair,) Had touched with finger-tip afire, She smoothed my tousled hair, And, kissing me and little mate, She bade us both goodnight, A-standing at the garden-gate To watch us out of sight:

I see her, now, with calm, pale face, And manners sweet and mild,— A queen of gentleness and grace,— Beloved by ev'ry child!

In ruins, now, the cottage lies; Its inmates, all, have fled; Beneath the dome of Bluer Skies Live they whom we call dead!

And, 'mong the blesséd seraph band,
(I hope, some day, to meet,)
Miss Myers sweet will, surely, stand
Her pupil loved to greet;—

Not bidding me a fond goodnight, As in those days gone by, But, wishing me a welcome bright, At the Gateway of the Sky!

SONG OF THE VIOLET

Along the country roadways, With cinq-foil carpet green, Where May-day sunshine glances, The violet is seen:

She loves the woodland borders,—
A shelter from the storm;
She hides 'mong leaflets withered
To keep her snug and warm:

And, tho' she wears the purple, (Because of royal race,) She bears her robes with meekness, And droops her modest face

On which the dews of midnight, Like teardrops, gleam, at morn, Which Phoebus dries, so gently, Soon after day is born:

O Violet, that hideth
To Nature's heart so near,
To whom cleared spots in forests
Are, ever, fondly dear,

What joy I feel, the instant
I spy your lovely head!
How glad am I to snatch you
From out the dry leaves dead

And bear you off to garnish,
(With thy rare beauty sweet,)
My humble, plain apartments
Thy smile makes bower complete!

What worlds of bliss those beings, Confined indoors, must lack Who hurry to the office, The school-room, mill, and back,

With not a single second
To spare to wildwoods roam,—
To thee find in thy beauty,
And, then, to bear thee home!

Oh! dainty, little blossom,
I'd rather see thy face
Than any queen of mortals
Adorned with gems and lace!

IN THE COUNTRY KIRK

Soft lay the snow on roof and road; Icy, the fringe around Barn, shed and ample, old abode Low built upon the ground;

Up to the doorstone drew a sleigh,
Drawn by a mare of brown,
Into which stepped a bride, one day,
Gay in her satin gown;

Then, o'er the highway sped the mare, '(Proud of the pair she drew,)
Thro' the crisp, clear, but, biting air,
Under the sky of blue;

Cold altho' blew the brumal blast, Warm 'neath fur robes they lay, Scanning the houses, which they past, Scattered along the way:

Soon, in the kirk's great, roomy pew, Close to her husband's side, Decked in her wedding outfit new, Leaned the young, city bride;

Ne'er, a more pleasing pair than they Sat in that house of prayer,— She, in her scarlet bonnet gay, He, in his curling hair; Happy as handsome looked they, too;— She, with eyes brown and bright; He, with those laughing orbs of blue Showing in her delight:

Long was the prayer the pastor said; Lengthy, the sermon drawn; But, to the wife, so newly wed, Short was it all, that morn:

When to its end the service drew, Scarce could the lady tell. Aught of the rector's words, 'tis true, For, on her ear they fell

Like to a murm'ring; mountain stream, Ringing its cadence clear, Which interrupts no sweet, day dream, Dreamt its swift current near;

Prayer was the theme on which he dwelt,— Penance and earnest prayer; But, naught but love, the young bride felt, Ever, could be her care;

Love would her watchword be, for aye,— Love, tender love and true, Lasting out life's eventful day, Pure as the morning dew!

Now, where the snow drifts soft and deep, Near where he drove his bride, Soundly that gracious groom doth sleep, There, in the kirkyard wide:

She, with those lustrous locks grown white, Oft, when the church bells chime, Dreams she sits, yet, a young bride bright, As in the olden time:

And, as the years glide swift away, Oftener, she thinks of him; Oftener, she bows her tresses gray; Oftener, her eyes grow dim;

Oftener, she hears his gentle tone, As, with a warm embrace, Fondly he kisses her,—his own, Stroking her smiling face!

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

The snow lies deep on hamlet, mount and plain; Each fir and cedar wears an ermine cloak; The sun, behind dun clouds, in grave disdain, Shows not his face, altho' we him invoke:

But, come with me, across the boundless sea, To warmer climes and fairer scenes than this! Where snow and ice shall, always, strangers be! Where olive-groves and crystal streams, ne'er, miss

To woo the traveller with their charms, so sweet!
To hold him spellbound with remembrance dear!
To make his heart with quick pulsations beat!
To lead his soul his Heavenly Father near!

For, isn't this the land where Christ was born?

The place where shepherds watched their flocks, by night?

And does there not a stately church adorn
The spot where Christ, first, saw the earthly light?

A church which stands upon the very place
Where, once, that inn so crowded full did Ite
That to the stable Mary turned her face,
And where our Saviour opened, first, his eye,

Within a manger's rough but shelt'ring fold,
O'er which bright angels kept a vigil sweet
While Wise Men myrrh, and frankincense and
gold,
In adoration, laid before His feet?

Let us, in spirit, on this Christmas morn, Whilst organs peal and carols heavenward soar, Kneel down where, long ago, our King was born; For, marked it is upon the marble floor,

And many knees have softly pressed its star, Yet, worn and dim, it, still, proclaims the place To ev'ry pious pilgrim from afar Where ancient shepherds, first, beheld Christ's face!

Then, as we kneel, oh, deep within our souls, Thou Star, that flamed that first, famed Christmas night,

Shine, once again, while heavenly music rolls,
And fill them full with thine effulgence bright!

TO THE BURNING BOGS OF PEAT

Ye peat bogs around me extending So brown, as I haste in the train, I pray to the heavens, blue bending, To give of their bountiful rain!

And, yet, your soft smoke, (slow upcurling In spirals of gray to the skies, Like pennons of gauze, fair, unfurling,) Is beautiful, bogs, to mine eyes!

But, soon, a snow sheet, cold and freezing, Will quench the hot fires in thy breast, As, loudly, Jack Frost whirls, a-wheezing, Above the low place of thy rest!

Sleep on, thro' the long winter cheerless! Sleep on, and may sweet be thy dream! Heed not shouts of skaters, so fearless, Who o'er thy cold coverlet teem!

Ere long, will thy reeds and thy rushes Grow green as an emerald fair, While 'mongst them the meadowlark hushes Her brood with solicitous care!

The iris will bathe in the waters
That gleam on thy waistoat of green;
And fair Arethusa's loved daughters
Will blush when their rendezvous's seen!

Ah! then, 'tis thy face is entrancing,
Ye peat bogs, now, smould'ring and brown,
With sunbeams of gold lightly glancing
'Pon brow bound by springtime's flower crown!

I'd like to stroll by, ye bogs, slowly, To list to the sermons ye preach! To learn from your lilies, so lowly, The lessons, alone, they can teach!

Too fleet is the steam-train, a flying;
To walk far too long is the way;
So, get I but glances, on-hieing,
When spring tricks thee out in garb gay!

CHILDHOOD DAYS

Oh, how blest were the days of childhood, When we bore not a shade of care! When we roved thro' the tangled wildwood In bare feet and with tousled hair!—

When the hay-mow, so high, we hunted For the eggs of the speckled hen! When we fed the old hog which grunted From her straw in the barnyard pen!

When we skipped on to school, a-singing, (Tho' 'twas all of a weary mile,)
Our loved songs and gay rounds a-ringing
On our red, smiling lips, the while!—

When we rode for the cows, each gloaming, On the back of the old, gray mare!— When we went o'er the meadows roaming For spring blossoms, so sweet and fair!

When the sun shone so bright and beaming, And the cold seemed so clear and still, How we coasted, with shout and screaming, Down the slope of the little hill!

And we think, when we're nearing seventy, Of those days, long ago, so bright, When we bread ate with milk in plenty, Ere we climbed to our beds, at night,

And to peaceful and restful slumber, Not to wake till the dawn of day, When we rose, (not a care t'encumber,) Making plans for the day's sweet play!—

When we cared for nor crown or penny, Thinking, ne'er, whence came drink or food, Or our clothing and toys, so many, Which we took in a thoughtless mood!

Ah! those days do we, all, remember,— The fair days of our early June, When we reach frosty, old December, And our songs seem all out of tune!

ODE TO MY MAPLE TREE

Here, 'neath the shade of my maple I'm sitting; Soft thro' its boughs sighs the sweet, summer breeze;

Fairy-like shadows, so cool, come a-flitting
Round me and Fritzie, asleep at my knees;
Sunshine, so gold of hue,
Hard tries to filter thro'
Foliage full of my bountiful tree,
Which, for three years, in love,
Proudly hath towered above
Me, as I sat 'neath its shelter, so free:

Oft, have I watched tender leaflets a-drooping, With'ring in August's hot, sultry high-noons; Oft, I've observed giddy insects a-trooping
Round thee, in swarms, humming Love's sweetest tunes;
Then, at the set of sun,
Nightly, I've lightly run,
Bathing thy roots in cool water, so clear;
And, how rejoiced I'd be,
Always, at morn, to see
How much refreshed would my maple appear:

Murmuring maple, as straight as an arrow,
Even in winter, when bare is thy breast,
Loved art thou, well, by the bluejay and sparrow,
Seeking, in tempests, a spot where to rest!
Seamed is thy bole, so brown!
Graceful, thy leafy crown,
Bowing and bending, when bluff blows the blast!
How it would grieve my heart,
Were we, my Tree, to part!

Till shall we die may our comradeship last!

Fair is my tree, when, (from cradles, so downy,)
Peep the young buds in their gowns of light
green;
Fairer is he when each gay, little brownie,

Fairer is he when each gay, little brownie,
Clad in bright scarlet, each autumn, is seen;
Then, when I shed a tear
Over dropped leaves, so sere,
Dressed like a bride, on her bright, wedding

morn,
There, stands my maple pale,

Drooping 'neath snowy veil, Pure as a babe on the day it is born:

Then, when the mists from the meadows come creeping,

Folding my tree in dank blankets of gray, Sometimes, it happens the North Wind comes sweeping

Down from the pole, ere the dawn of the day; So, when I rise from sleep,

Down thro' my shutters peep, Trembling, I stand at the sight that I see; For, clad in shining mail, Now, looms my maple hale,

Looking so fierce my first thought is to flee;

But, when warm rays of soft sunshine fall flashing, Full, on his helmet, his cuirass and greaves,
Down from its scabbard his claymore falls clashing.—

nig,—
Down to the ground, on last year's decayed leaves;
Then, thro' his visor bright,
Gleaming with morning light,

Hear I a voice, but, unnat'ral it sounds;

"I am thy maple tree! Friend dear, oh, set me free! I am a prisoner, e'en here, on thy grounds!

"Aid me! I'm freezing 'neath icicle armor! Tear away corselet and bare my cold breast! Rip sparkling helm from my head! (I'll be calmer!)

Rip it! be quick! 'tis my dying request!" Then, whilst the wind low moans, Loudly, the warrior groans, Bursting his bonds like an athlete of might, Till, 'neath his feet I spy Millions of fragments lie, Glitt'ring like gems in the clear, wintry light:

But, whate'er guise, Tree, you wear,—of a brown-Clothed in gay crimson and gold, in the fall;-That of wee babes, couched in cradles, so downy;— Or of an armor-clad champion tall;-Or, (to my choice, the best,) Bride, in soft snowflakes dressed;

Dearly, I'll love thee, forever and aye! Wide-spreading Maple Tree, Long, may you shelter me!

Long, may I thee have to cherish, I pray!

SUNSET AT THE FARM

When the willows, (a-bending, so low, 'Bove the brook in the meadow-lot green,) Lengthening shades o'er the glassy stream throw, Where blue flags, in their vanity, lean,

When the touch of the sun turns the vane, (On the rambling, old barn,) to real gold, And each cobwebby, cracked window-pane Seems a fiery furnace to hold,

Then, there come, from the depths of the vale, Brindled Bess, the May Queen and June Bride, Chewing cuds in contentment, each tail Switching flies from a sleek, glossy hide;-

Jack, the dog, barking loud at their heels, Their slow footsteps a little to haste, While the musical, sheep-bell chime steals From the pasture lands running to waste:

As the boy starts to milk the May Queen, Up the road come a whinny and neigh; And two hayracks are, presently, seen Piled, sky high, with their loads of sweet hay; And the voices of Dick and black Nell, On the air, (now, so solemn and still,) Seem like clarion notes clear to swell, As they echo from mountain to hill:

When the horses are watered and fed, Well wiped down with soft wisps of sweet hay, When the sun, in his chariot red, To the fast-fading west speeds away,

When the moon and famed Hesperus bright Light their lanterns in yon evening sky, Then, the master and men, with hearts light, (After wash at the well, the barn by,)

Sit them down to a nourishing meal, Which they eat, after said is a grace By the farmer who ever doth feel That God's goodness to him he can trace

In the harvests abundant he reaps From the mountain, the moorland and vale, With which storehouse and hayloft he heaps, And which, never, he's, yet, found to fail:

Then, while mistress and maid table clear, And the boy wood-box fills with chips dry, The low grunts of the hogs they can hear, As they root in the straw of the sty:

Now, the farmer strolls out, with his pipe, To the porch, in the fresh, dewy air, There, to kiss the round cheeks,-(peaches ripe,) Of his wee, toddling grandchild, so fair:

Soon, the chat of the child, on his arm, Takes him back, for a decade of years, To the time when her mother could charm From his breast the day's worries and fears;

And he turns his tanned face toward the hill, (Where she sleeps, now, 'neath daisies, so white,) Heeding not the low chant of the rill, Which she, once, used to list with delight;

Then, his pipe lays he down, and on hair Of her baby he seals a kiss light, For, she, now, in soft slumber, doth wear, More than ever, her mother's smile bright:

Then, while grandma tucks grandchild endeared In the crib, where her mother, once, lay, Crooning softly a lullaby weird To the carol the house-crickets play,

Grandpa muses and smokes in his seat
Till nine strokes from the old kitchen clock
Rouse him up from his train of thought fleet,
When he rises the ashes to knock

From his pipe of white clay, long and straight, Climbing slowly the stairs to the place Where his wife by the baby doth wait, With a smile on her peaceful, old face:

With no light, except that of the moon, (Which floods over the smooth, painted floor,)
To their beds they retire, to the tune
That the whippowills sadly outpour;

And their sleep is refreshing and sound, Not a noise to disturb deserved rest Save the growls of dear Jack,—the old hound, Keeping guard over all he loves best:

God be thanked for such homes of the blest, Far away from town turnult and din!— Far away from the cares that infest!— Far away from temptation and sin!

Would that all in the close, crowded town, Who're surrounded by evil and harm, Once a year, at the least, might care drown In the sweet, peaceful joys of the farm!

TO THE MERRIMAC AND THE POET WHO DWELLS ON ITS BANKS

Like a King of the Turf, (justly proud Of the medal of gold he hath won, His neck arching at cheers of the crowd,) Flecked with foam is his glossy breast dun:

So, the Merrimac, boasting of feet
That have turned many thousands of mills,
Now, flows on, with a smile passing sweet,
Thro'the pines and the firs of the hills!

Nevermore, shall those silvery feet
Drive the huge, dripping wheels, round and
round!

Nevermore, shall that heart throb and beat At his waters wild, riotous sound!

By the rough, old, chain bridge, spanning stream, (Which creaks loud at pedestrians' tread,)
He strides on, (in a happy, day dream,)
O'er the shallows and shoals of his bed:

At the house by the bridge, oft, he looks, Where dwells she,—the famed Poetess fair, Whose sweet verses are like to the brooks Which meander 'mong rare maiden-hair:

Quite as brown as the rocks 'neath his tide Is the glance of his beautiful eye, As he looks on the casement, flung wide, And the lady who loit'reth it by,

Listening, long, at the lullaby low The loved river to her softly sings, Wishing much that each note she might know And the mystical meaning it brings:

It is twenty, long years since I viewed
Thy clear waves gently purling along
'Neath the bridge, ancient, rusty and rude,
But, I, still, well remember thy song,

And the home of the lady, hard by, Almost hidden by blossoms, so gay, Which look up to the beauteous, blue sky, Listening, too, to the tune of thy lay!

The sweet poetry, tender and bright,
Of this gray, little lady, so grand,
Like the work thou hast done, Water Sprite,
Is well known over all the broad land!

May this Writer of, "Oh, Soft, Spring Airs," Give the world sweet songs more, Lord, I pray, While the Merrimac on bravely fares To the sea in its own, quiet way!

VOICES OF NATURE

Dearest Reader, have ever you listened, On some halcyon day, to songs sweet, Which, by sea, or, (in deep, tangled woodlands,) Nature sings to, forever, repeat?—

To the lap of the tide on the shingle,
To the breakers that roll on the sand,
To the surge of tempestuous billows,
To the bittern's loud roar thro' the land?—

To the rune of the pattering raindrops, To the ramp of the wild, wintry blast, To the rumble of far-distant thunder, To the seething of cataracts vast?—

To the babble of brooks o'er their pebbles, To the lisp of the leaves, overhead, To the rustle of reeds in the marshes, To the moan of the sea in its bed?— To the hooting of owls in the twilight,
To the drum of the grouse on a log,
To the buzz of the bee in bright blossoms,
To the croak of the hoarse-throated frog?—

To the falling of nuts in the forest,

To the crunch of the snow 'neath your tread,

To the woodpecker's tap on the tree-trunk,

To the gander's, "Honk! honk!" overhead?

If you have, then, you know, without telling, What huge pleasure and profit are won In, each day, lending ear to Dame Nature Who will, never, her lessons have done!

COUSIN CORDELIA

Laughing and crowing rode sweet Cody small, Swung on some shoulder high,
Over the rough, rocky, old, pasture wall,
Under the summer sky,
While from the deep, balsam jungle, hard by,
Broke on her keen, baby ear the clear cry,
"S-o-w Y-o-u-r O-a-t-s!
Peabody! Peabody!"

Soft waved the grass and the grain in the wind! Almost waist-high were they! Ripe enough, soon, for the reaper to bind And in the mow to lay, Whilst from the evergreens, over the way, Loud sang the white-throats, in syllables gay, "S-o-w Y-o-u-r O-a-t-s! Peabody! Peabody! Peabody!"

Sometimes, she shuffled from one of her feet Just a wee sandal fair Down 'mongst the oats or the blooming buckwheat, Leaving her ankle bare, But, for her shoe had she never a care, Whilst from the balsams rang out the notes rare,

Whilst from the balsams rang out the notes ra "S-o-w Y-o-u-r O-a-t-s!
Peabody! Peabody! Peabody!"

Ah! how she reached for the raspberries red, Growing so thick around!
Ah! how she nodded her bright, curly head,
When these for her they found,
As at her side followed Fido, the hound,
And, from the fir-trees, rang out the sweet sound,
"S-o-w Y-o-u-r O-a-t-s!
Peabody! Peabody!"

Then, when, at home, in the farmhouse, so old, Saw they the shoe was lost, Sent they good Fido, so brave and so bold,
Where they the field had crossed,
Knowing he'd find it, tho' heavy the cost,
As rang the lay from the balsams, green-mossed,
"S-o-w Y-o-u-r O-a-t-s!
Peabody! Peabody! Peabody!"

Still, sing the white-throated sparrows, today,
Out from the fir-trees old;
But, wee Cordelia, (that summer, so gay,)
Also, dear Fido bold,
List not the lay, for, both sleep 'neath the mould,
Far from the spot where the music's, e'er, rolled,
"S-o-w Y-o-u-r O-a-t-s!
Peabody! Peabody! Peabody!"

HER DREAM

Upon her couch in slumber soft she lay; Far overhead, the stars close vigil kept, And thro' the lattice whisp'ring winds of autumn crept,

As o'er her soul this thrilling dream held sway;

Before her vision spread a judgment hall With agéd judge in wig and flowing gown; Within the dock, a youth, whose locks of darkest brown

In thick profusion o'er his brow did fall;

On court-room chairs there lounged a motley throng,
Among which sat a man with drooping head
And countenance as colorless as of the dead;

When, at the sudden clang of brazen gong,

The walls of crowded hall swung slowly out, And, 'fore the dreaming sleeper's frightened eyes, Behold! she saw a huge, rude, wooden cross arise, With hangman and his helpers round about:

Just then, the man, (with wan, averted face,) Upraised the head he, once, had held so proud, And scanned, in silence deep, the hushed and gaping crowd,

As tho' of some one he would find a trace:

And, then, it seemed to her upon the bed
That mong the press she stood with aching heart,—
A heart that bled for him who bore so well his part,
Tho' leaped his pulse and whirled his handsome
head:

And, while she gazed upon the prisoner pale, Who must, erelong, a traitor's death endure Because the views of Heaven held he so firm and

He'd not retract tho' tender flesh should quail,

It chanced, the eye, that roved the court-room round,

Espied her form; and, o'er the face of stone A smile, like sunshine flooding barren mountains

Burst forth, as, at one graceful, nimble bound,

He benches cleared, and at the dreamer's feet Knelt he, saluting her in accents soft; Then, as he raised those deep blue, pleading eyes,

She seemed to list Love's language, pure and sweet:

"At last," she murmured, "thou, my Idol fair, Art come to me thy peerless love to vow!" She trembled at the thought; but, what was this that, now, She heard from lips which thrice had kissed her

She heard from lips which thrice had kissed her hair?

"My Friend, I ask of thy deep love this boon,—
If thou wouldst make me wholly, truly glad,
On yonder, rude and cruel cross take place of lad!
Be quick! decide! he dies at stroke of noon!"

The brow, (that beat with joy, a second since,)
With sweat, now, shone, in many a glistening bead;
In man's beseeching eyes, (that looked their fearful greed,)

She gazed, again, nor did she cringe or wince:

"I will!" then, came in measured accents slow; "Upon the cross, to win thy love, I'll die, For, living, you will, evermore, that meed deny, Tho' decades drear should slowly come and go!"

Around her form caressing arms he threw, And pressed a grateful kiss upon her brow; She felt that any death would welcome, thrice, be, now.

And smiled upon the cross which stood in view:

Then, off her neck his circling arms she broke, Cast one more look upon his happy face, And strode with slow, yet, steady footsteps towards the place

Where stood the cross; then, at that instant, woke:

A dream it was,—a vision, if you will, Which, till from earth the dreamer shall depart, Will lie upon the tender tablets of her heart Its strange, (yet, heaven-sent,) mission to fulfil!

LAY OF THE ROBBER JAY

When the snow is flying, when the wind is cold, Hark the jays a-crying! List the robbers bold!

Roosting on the cedar, where the suet's hung, See the robber leader! Hear his rasping tongue!

Tipping head, not vainly, first, to left, then, right, (He may see more plainly just what food's in sight,)

Soon, by something bated, in some corner bare, Rings his war-cry hated thro' the frosty air!

Dives he down and loses not a second's time, Taking what he chooses, pays he, tho', no dime:

How the crumbs he snatches! How he stabs the fat! Yea, this gormand matches, e'en, a famished rat!

Note his coat, blue beaming! Mark his kingly crest!

But, a coward seeming is he, at his best!

All the snowbirds, feeding, at his advent, flee; Well they know his breeding! Know his glutton glee!

Yet, if but a motion in the house he sees, Robber Jay's a notion ill the food doth please:

With a whir of feather, with a grating cry, He and his, together, gain the wood, hard by;

Watching, like a sentry, till is clear the way, Then, another entry makes the robber jay!

With a heart forgiving, we should give him food Who but gets his living in this manner rude!

THE CACTUS

(To the Late Mrs. George F----)

Elegant cactus, radiant red, (Bright as the sun, when, from his bed, Swiftly, at morn, each pleasant day, Blithe, he upsprings and bounds away,) Kiss with thy carmine lips, so rare, Cheeks of thy mistress, old, yet, fair! Prick not the hand which fondles the! None can more true and tender be! Dearly she loves, that woman old, Dearly she loves thy heart of gold!

She's been a queen, as well as thou,
'Fore whom rapt listeners, low, did bow;—
Thou, queen of beauty; she, of song;
Sweet was her bird-like voice, years long;
Many a lovely flower did rest,
Once, on her trembling, modest breast;
Now, she is feeble, worn and old;
Laces, no more, her neck enfold;
Close to the hearthstone lingers she,
Nursing her grandchild dear and thee;
Soothe thou her last remaining years!
Wipe from her eyes all falling tears!
Grand was her mission; now, 'tis o'er;
Pattern by her, and ask no more!

WHEN MY SHIP COMES IN

When my ship comes swiftly sailing O'er the magic sea of gold, Bearing proudly in its coffers Countless, earthly wealth untold,

I shall hie me to the mountains, And on southern slope so green Build a tiny, cosy cottage, 'Gainst which roses red shall lean:

Thro' whose casements, ever open, Shall stream in the cheerful sun; Whence I'll watch the changing shadows; Hear the brawling brooklets run;—

Feel the cooling, balmy breezes Laden heavily with smell Of the orange, peach and lemon Which our palates please so well;—

See the shepherd, (with his collie Guarding sheep,) approach the fold, When the star of evening glimmers In the west, above the wold:

Or, when dew sleeps on the upland, 'Neath its million jets of light, I shall skim the mountain roadway, (Winding, silver ribbon bright,)

Sitting, charmed, behind my horses, Who shall know nor spur nor whip, But, who'll ears turn back to listen To kind words from driver's lip:—

Who shall follow me, like kittens, All about the garden wide, Rubbing heads against my shoulder, Gamb'ling gayly at my side,— Delving deep in ev'ry pocket
For the sugar, there, they'll find,—
Keeping off the jealous spaniel
With her playful brood behind:

And, when night her sable curtains Draws o'er all my landscape fair, I'll retire to vine-clad cottage, On whose canvases, so rare,

I may gaze where master artists Sketched, with skill, some mountain view, Or, clear lake with firs reflected In its placid bosom blue,

There, to sit and read and ponder
O'er the books the cases fill
Till the clock upon the mantel
Chimes the curfew hour, so still;—

Then, to dream of sprites and dryads, Nymphs and fairies till the time When Aurora's prancing ponies Fling from bits the jewelled rime;—

Rising, then, to visit horses, Dogs and cattle, lambs and sheep; Feasting eyes on snowy summits, (Guardians grim which never sleep;)

Breathing, deep, the air life-giving; Thanking God that I'm so blest; Singing, with the birds, His praises Till, again, I go to rest!

AUGUST

Oh, August, clad in your cloak of dust, With your breath so scorching hot, We welcome you, for, we know we must, But, we love you not one jot!

The hardhack, (panicled, now, with pink,) Nods by ev'ry pasture wall; The meadow-sweet, next of kin, I think, Tries to be than she more tall:

Sleek, lazy cattle lie down to chew, 'Neath some spreading tree, their cud; And, by the bars, graceful asters blue Cluster thick, tho', still, in bud:

The gonfalon of the goldenrod
For a stirring breeze awaits
To flaunt its color far o'er the sod,
When your burning air abates:

The brawling brook, to the river bound, Is a stream that sings, no more; And jewel-weeds, in its dried-up ground, Hang their heads in sorrow sore:

The birds are songless, throughout the day, Tho' they come, with beaks oped wide, To the dish of water I always lay 'Neath the trees, at broad noontide:

But, locusts call, in their strident note, From the bearded wheat and rye; And butterflies gayly flit and float Where the fair moth-mulleins lie:

The hills are wrapped in a haze of smoke, And the forest leaves are still; While, now and then, can be heard the croak Of a crow in yonder ghyll:

Far overhead, like a bloodshot eye, Phoebus glares o'er hill and dale; Whilst, 'twixt the earth and the purpling sky Hangs a thin, transparent veil:

Some sultry morn, at a highland brook,
Will the shearers wash the sheep,
And, when they're shorn, oh, how small they'll
look,
As, away, they'll, frightened, leap!

Ah, August, when, (with your breath, so hot,)
You green grass-blades turn to brown,
In meadow-land and in garden-plot,
You make ev'ry farmer frown,

For, crops dry up and no plant does well Save the thistle, far afield, Or trumpet weeds, in yon boggy dell, Which no food us mortals yield!

And, if a shower you're so good to pour O'er each dusty road and lane, We feel as warm as we did before Your short fall of muggy rain!

So, now, you see, August hot, that we
Do not love you as we might;
But, if you care our Beloved to be,
You must change your ways, some night!

ROBERT EMMET'S LAST MOMENTS

On a scaffold, rudely fashioned, Stood the Rebel of the day With a face, pale, unimpassioned, And with eyes, deep-set and gray, By a kerchief bandaged tightly
To shut out the sunshine sweet
Which shone down, in pity, brightly,
Upon Dublin's dirty street:

Not a nerve or muscle quivered; Full of fortitude stood he, While the mob, about him, shivered At his attitude, so free:

With his noble head uplifted, As tho' lost in dreams of love, Like a statue, this man gifted Towered the gaping crowd above:

In the hand, (that, late, had wielded The sharp sword of shining steel,) A small scarf of white was shielded His approaching death to seal:

He was told, when he was ready, To the banner bright fling down; But, he quiet stood and steady, Moving not from heel to crown:

In the midst of silence deathless, For the Dead the Gaelic Wail From a peasant rose, but, breathless, Rested he, so calm and pale:

All unmoved, as tho a-listening,—
As if steeped in thoughts profound,
Emmet stood, while eyes, a-glistening,
Marked the mass of men, around:

In the mountain glen he rambled, With the hills a-purpling o'er, Where the foaming fountains gamboled With a murmur or a roar;—

With the hawthorn bushes budding, Scenting all the springtime air;— With the hermit-thrush a-flooding It with love-songs, sweet and rare:

"Mister Emmet, are you ready?"
Echoed like a bugle blast;
"No, not yet!" but, strong and steady,
To his Darling's eyes, at last,

Surged the love for which he'd waited Since a boy he'd been, in years, And her soul with his she mated In a flow of tender tears: "Are you ready?" now, repeated, Came the jailer's voice, again; But, with Sarah by him seated, Loitered he within the glen,

With the crimson foxgloves blushing On the hillocks' greening crest;— With his sweetheart's face a-flushing At her love, at last, confessed:

It was thoughts, like these, a-filling Robert Emmet's heart and brain Which all dread of death was stilling, Bringing rapture in their train!

WOODSIDE COT

Upon Huntington Hill, 'neath the pine trees, so green,

And the cedars, where chickadees call,

At the end of the road, where quite plainly is seen Great Moose Hill looming up like a wall,

I have builded my house which I call, "Woodside Cot,"

And I love it, no matter how drear

The long winter may be, or, the summer how hot, For, it's home, to my heart, oh, how dear!

But four rooms, (as four walls,) Woodside Cot do compose,

Which are cosy and snug as can be;

O'er the sunny, south porch climbs a red rambler rose.

Soon, to peep in the doorway at me;

On the east is my grove, where the pines deftly lay A thick carpet of rich, russet brown;

And the seats, scattered round, are of granite, so gray,

Cushioned well with green moss, soft as down:

To the northward, my lawn slopes abruptly away

To a forest of chestnut trees tall,

And, 'tis, here, that I watch for a tiny elf gray,

Who, I think, sleeps in yonder stone wall; And, when chestnuts, so shining and brown, scarce

shall grow,

Master Squirrel, with waistcoat of white,

Just you pay me a visit, and, then, you will know

That to you I can be most polite!

But, it's not on my garden, which lies to the west, Nor my parlor of pines, green and gray, That my eyes and attention the oftenest rest,

As I sit at my window, today!

At the foot of the cedars, which top the steep slope, (Where old Boreas loudest doth blow,)

Is a basket of seeds, there, I placed in the hope

Is a basket of seeds, there, I placed in the hope
That the juncos I better might know;

Led by instinct, the blue-slaty birds found the grain;

First, came five; then, a dozen or more; Now, in flocks of fifteen, spite of snow or of rain, Come the White Bills to feed at my door!

So, with Mother and Bob, I'm not lonely, you see, With my squirrel, (I'll soon, better know,) With the juncos and chickadees coming to me, For a seed or a crust, thro' the snow!

And, when red, sunset rays touch my eaves, sloping low,

Turning fretting of ice to gems bright, I'll believe it a castle enchanted, you know, And that I am its princess, by right!

All the birds, flocking round, my retainers I'll call, Whom I'll feed with fresh suet and grain; For, no matter who, hungry, comes, here, to my hall.

He'll not beg for refreshment, in vain!

Yes, dear Woodside, I love thee, thou poor, little cot,

When the light on thee lovingly falls, And I pray the good Lord that it be my sweet lot To breathe out my last breath in thy halls!

LINES WRITTEN ON MY BIRTHDAY

Launched by the Lord on the Sea of Life, Fifty long years ago,

More of its peace have I seen than strife,—
More of its joy than woe;

And, as I stand at the golden goal, Stamped with its fifty miles, Looking back over my life, as a whole, Breaketh my face in smiles:

Jewels and gems have I none,—not one; Silver I've none to spare; But, I can sleep, when the day is done, Free from all cark and care:

Save my good mother, my friends are few, Yet, I've a home and health; And, with my spaniel, both fond and true, Zounds for your useless wealth! In my wee cot I am quite content, Far from the madding crowd, Where I can follow my study bent, Scorned by no neighbors proud:—

Built 'mong the trees, on the hilltop high, Where I can breathe God's air, Where I can see the fair, sunset sky, Naught can with this compare!

Cometh this thought, on my natal day, "Yet, tho' is seamed thy brow,
Close tho' is cropped thy thin locks of gray,
Time there is left thee, now!

"Use thou the talent within thy breast!
Use it, altho' so small!
Use it, nor let it, a second, rest!
Use it in aid of all!

"Maybe, the gift, (you have found so late,) Needs to be used to shine, Just like the gem, (in its rough, rude state,) Polishing makes so fine!

"And, as you've found, the sweet Muse doth make Merry each moment flow, So, for thine own and thy readers' sake, More of her try to know!

"She is a lass, who, at times, is coy; Yet, if to her you're true, Soon, you will find that your dearest joy, Truly, is her to woo!

"Many, long years you have lost on work Not to your taste, at all; But, for the time which is left you, shirk, Ne'er, when the Muse doth call!

"Knocketh she lightly upon the door! Quickly she speaks and flees, Telling her tale to one's ears, no more, Not e'en a king to please!"

Lord, make the Muse whisper in mine ear Songs which are pure and sweet! Songs which the sad will delight to hear, Even, to oft repeat!

Songs for the lowly who music love,— Songs which the lone may cheer,— Songs sweet as those of the turtle-dove, Sung in the springtime year! If I can sing but this sort of lay, Satisfied I shall be, When, at the close of each happy day, Finished some song I see!

ODE TO DISAPPOINTED FORTUNE SEEKERS FROM THE COUNTRY

Oh, come back to your mother, ye children Who have wandered for fame or for wealth! Oh, come back from the highways of striving! Come ye back and regain your lost health!

Come away from the hot, stifled city! Come away from the dark, dusty town! Come away, and she'll sing you a ditty! Come away, and she'll scatter each frown,

For, no longer, ye'll hear chud of autos, Or the clang of the telephone bell!— But, instead, the sweet solo of zephyrs Thro' the murmuring pines of the dell!

And the puff of the huge locomotive And the roar of the fierce, furnace blast Ye'll forget in the voice of the brooklet, When, from bondage released, it flies past!

Ye will list the wind wooing the laurel, As, by hedgerows, ye, loitering, pass! Ye will lips see, like ripest of cherries, Upon many a Hebe-like lass;

While the meek, patient, gentle-eyed oxen Will stand deep in the red clover sweet, And the sheep, in the pastures a-browsing, With a low, plaintive bah ye will greet!

Then, a small, cosy cot, on the uplands,
Whence ye'll watch your crops growing, each
morn,

Will repay ye for all your lost riches,

And ye'll thanks give that, here, were ye born!

So, now, come, for, your mother is calling From the mountains, the meadows and vale! And the wildflowers bright, on her bosom, Smile a welcome which, never, shall fail!

HIS FIGHT FOR LIFE

Far from the shore, so dear, Out on the ocean drear, Drifted a sail; Tossed by the billows white, Great was the boatman's fright, Caught in the gale: Lands none in Casco Bay Sailor could see, that day, Save Eagle Isle, Which, by God's help, he gained, Just before daylight waned, Where, for a while,

Glad was the seaman brave, Snatched from the swirling wave, Safe from the storm, Crouched by a driftwood fire, (Like to a pagan pyre,) Warming his form;

When, from old ocean bound, Fast came a whirring sound Puzzling him well; But, soon, 'twas all explained; Eyes, thro' the darkness strained, Earthward, quick, fell,

For, into fire and face Flew countless birds, apace, Drawn by the light, Striking with wing and beak, In their mad march to seek Rest for the night:

Seizing a stick to swing 'Gainst each fast flapping wing, Toiled he in vain; Then, falling flat a-ground, Birds wildly circled round, Beat, tho', the rain;

Resting, face downward, so,
'Scaped the good man each blow
Seabirds him dealt;
But, the benumbing cold
Caused him to be more bold,
Fear, tho' he felt;

So, on his feet, once more, Bleeding and smarting sore, (Oft, downward cast,) Minutes, like hours, dragged by, When, with a clearing sky, Day dawned, at last;

Soon as the sky grew light, Birds took to sudden flight, Leaving alone Him on the ledge, half dead, Wounds on his hands and head Cut to the bone: Ne'er, will that man forget Birds white with wings of jet, Graceful and trim, Skimming the misty air, Seeming to raise a prayer Piteous to Him.—

God, the All-Father wise, Ruler of earth and skies, Lord of the sea, Who, from His Throne on High, Lists ev'ry creature's cry, Faint tho' it be!

PLUMA'S SNUFF BOX

Look at this trinket tiny, Out of mahogany made, Yet, perfect, smooth and shiny, Here, on my whatnot laid!

Hardly you'd think that seventy, Seventy long years ago, Grandma was, then, but twenty, Loved by a blithesome beau,

Who, in his way beguiling, Gave her this pretty box, As she sat sweetly smiling, Darning her dainty socks:

Snuff Box, so bright and shining, Grandpa well formed thy frame! Sweet were his thoughts entwining Thee, as with tongues of flame!

Thus ran these thoughts;—"Fair Feather," (Pluma was Grandma's name,)
"Long may we dwell, together,
Thou, as my honored Dame!"

Fashioned by Grandpa's fingers, Pierced by Dan Cupid's dart, Love of a lifetime lingers, Here, in this Snuff Box Heart!

When Grandpa gave the token, Back on that halcyon day, Little he dreamed, unbroken, Here, it would find its way:

And, as o'er box she bended, Little did Grandma trust Well would it be defended After her heart was dust:

Snuff Box, so smooth and shining, As o'er thee, now, I lean, There, on thy polished lining Never a speck is seen!

Grandma, so prim and petted, Need not you, e'er, suppose, Ever, put snuff, so fetid, Up to her little nose!

But, in the tiny token
She a sweet bean did lay;
And, from its breast unbroken
Comes a faint scent, today!

Now, in yon, green God's Acre Lovers rest, side by side,— Grandma and Snuff Box Maker, Grandpa and long-loved Bride!

And, dear, old Snuff Box, ever, Ever, I'll stand by thee! Nothing but death can sever Grandpa's sweet gift from me!

THE SQUIRREL BANQUET

When the days begin to lengthen, And the weather's biting cold, It is then I try to strengthen My sweet friendship, formed of old, With my furry friends of yonder wood,— Such a happy, hearty brotherhood!

To these furry fellows' dwelling, In the wildwood hollows bare, Send I, ne'er, a message telling Of the freshly furnished fare; But, when comes a cold and frosty morn, On the icy slope I cast some corn:

First, I see but one guest gather Round the board, just now, prepared, And he lonesome seems, and, rather, At his strange, good fortune, scared, With his brightly-beaming, watchful eye Fixed so fast upon my casement high:

Soon, I see come thither creeping,
'Long the ground or down a tree,
One by one, his comrades, peeping
All about the spot to see

What their old companion's doing, there, On the hard and frozen slope, so bare:

Then, the simple feast enjoying, Sits a group of squirrels gray, Whilst the wintry wind is toying With their fluffy tails which they 'Long their chubby backs so deftly twine, Like to silver mantles, soft and fine:

Eight, sometimes, surround the table, In a circle sitting, there, And, 'tis, then, that I am able To admire these fellows fair, As they crack the kernels of the corn To them flung, each cold and frosty morn:

All alike in size and color

Look these little friends of mine,
And their soft, gray coats grow duller,
As I note their eyeballs shine,
Whilst they cram the corn with pretty paws
In their fair, but, forceful, little jaws:

And they seem so solemn, sitting
On their haunches, round the corn,
Had I, never, seen them flitting
Thro' the woods, some springtime morn,
I would not believe these creatures staid
Could have, ever, scampered or have played:

So, the banquet is attended
By no signs of joy or glee;
Each wee head is downward bended,
(Tho' each eye is watching me,)
As I stand to look at them, below,
On the frozen ground or sparkling snow;

And, if, once, I lift a finger,
Or, e'en, speak in glad surprise,
Messrs. Squirrel think to linger
Would be just a bit unwise;
So, they leave the feast without farewells,
And go leaping on o'er fields and fells;

They are out of sight and hearing
In a moment's time, maybe,
From some pine-tree trunk a-peering,
(Or some hollow log,) at me,
Where they wait until they think I've gone,
When, again, they come to eat their corn:

But, there's one, among these brothers, Who has much more faith in me Than has ev'ry one the others, Whom, each winter day, I see, And he, sometimes, sits, unmoved, when I Cast him corn from out my casement high,

Looking up to see each motion,
As I raise the window, wide;
But, he, never, has a notion
To run off, like them, and hide;
And the golden grain, ofttimes, falls down
On his graceful head and grayish gown:

Ah! the winter may be dreary
With its nipping cold and snow,
And it makes the hearts grow weary
Of most people whom I know,
But, if friends in fur, like mine, had they,
They'd be grieved when winter passed away!

THE FIESTA

Up the long, winding path of the mountain, Like a giant's great staircase of rock, In the glow of a fair, springtime morning, Pious pilgrims of Mexico flock

To the chapel built high on the summit, (Where the breeze fans their cheeks and their ears,)

Whence the Village of Amecameca Like a beautiful picture appears:

As they wipe the hot sweat from their foreheads, Gazing back at their homes in the vale, Let us scan, for a second, the features Of these denizens dark of the dale!

There's the mother, (with brow yet unfurrowed, And thick hair black as Erebus, still,) Who looks long at yon snow-capped volcanoes, Ere resuming the climb of the hill;

Or, maybe, as she chats with a neighbor, From her bosom, so ample, she'll pull The much-loved cigarette whose smoke curling 'Bove sombrero uprises like wool:

And the shadowy eyes, wistful, pensive, Of the Mexican Indian maid Peep from 'neath a rich wealth of black tresses Where a bright cactus bloom's deftly laid:

Then, the stout, stalwart form of the father, (Clad in blouse of white, spotless as snow,) Slowly toils up the height, gazing, often, At his hut of adobe, below,—

At the pine-belted Titans, above him, With huge glacier and mighty crevase,— At the "White Woman," daring the Indians O'er the mystical mountains to pass:

And these simple, sweet-tongued, gentle Indians, (The descendants of th' Aztecs, of old,) Talk of vows which impelled this day's journey, Of their children, their homes,—ne'er, of gold:

With suppressed exclamations of wonder At the grandeur of scenes spread below, With no laughter, no jest, no commotion, Devout worshippers grave, upward, go:

As they clamber the steep, rugged roadway, They stop, often, to rev'rently pray At the Shrines of the Cross, standing silent Like tall monitors mute of the way;

And, as, kneeling, they breathe, "Pater nosters,"—
(The rotund, short, and patient-faced dame,
Or, the willowy-formed, modest maiden,)
We might hear, low-pronounced, Jesus's Name:

When they've heard the good Priest's word of welcome, Exhortation, and blessing, and prayer,

They sit down 'neath the trees, calmly happy, Breaking fast with tortillas, so rare:

When the snow on yon peak blushes slightly At the kiss of the fast-setting sun, They begin to descend Sacro Monte, Well content that their duty is done;

For, the Spaniards, who, once, spoiled their temples, (Wresting images, silver and gold,)
In return, taught these innocent people
Of one Father, one Shepherd, one Fold:

Now, at morn and at eve, when the fragrance Of pomegranates, in bloom, fills the air, One may hear, o'er the wide campos wafted, The sweet notes of the vesper hymn rare:

In snug, sun-dried, clay cots, 'neath the cedars, These poor Indians, (of calm, serene mind,) Dwell at peace, heedless, e'er, of the monster With breath smoking and throat sulphur-lined:

May their deep-trusting natures, oh, never, Be deceived by a treacherous foe, But, may life in the Indian pueblos For a thousand years, yet, smoothly flow!

SONG OF A PAIR OF SHOES

Soleless and stringless, patched and peeled, Here, stand my shoes, which, far afield, Many a time, have borne their rider, Who, long ago, much wished them wider, But, who, today, finds room to spare For his old feet, so bruised and bare!

Once, these same shoes, (now, scratched and scarred,)
Over the dance-floor, waxed and hard,
Gleefully skipped, soft, smooth and shining,

Decked in high heels and satin lining; Now, torn and twisted, cracked and creased,

Who would allow them at a feast?

Wrinkled and rent by sun and storm, Try they to keep my old feet warm; Yet, tho' they're rusty, daubed and dusty, Ever, I've found them true and trusty;— Ready to tramp the roughest road, Bearing their heavy, living load!

Little is left of what they were, When, in the waltz, I whispered her, Asking to dance with her, forever, Telling her naught our love could sever; That's ere to drink I took, good Dame! That's when I bore an honored name!

But, like these shoes, from bad to worse, Slowly I've fallen, (drink, my curse,) Till in the ragged rogue, so dirty, Never, you'd know the beau of thirty Who was proclaimed the prince of all In that renowned, old-time, mask ball!

So, with these shoes I, ne'er, can part! Dame, thus to do would wring my heart! But, can't you spare me, Dame, in pity, Something to eat to pay this ditty?—Something to bear me on my way, Tho', I am sure, that short's my stay?

Soon, like the shoes, so loved, I'll lie, Face uppermost, 'neath yonder sky;—
Over my head the leaves a-heaping,
Over my heart the rain a-weeping;—
Over my feet, which miles have tramped,
These faithful shoes by dewdrops damped!

Then, should you hear my corse they bear From where I die to rest elsewhere,

Bid them to let these shoes of leather And their old owner sleep together, For, they were given me, Dame, by one, Who, like her gift, earth's work hath done, But, were she here, would be my Wife, Saving me, Dame, from a drunkard's life!

PEGGY

Oh! Peggy's a maid I love, right well! And, Peggy, yes, she loves me! Her voice is as clear as the vesper bell That floats over haugh and lea!

Good Peggy, she asks no silken gown; Her needs, they are very few; How gently her eyes of liquid brown Gaze out from her hide's dark hue!

Dear Peggy is happy when she goes To feed in the meadow green, And, there, in the tender grass, her nose A-cropping the clover's seen;

And, when sunset skies gleam rosy red, She lies on her bended knees, A-chewing her cud, with handsome head Caressed by the evening breeze:

But, sometimes, they hear in yonder cot A plaintive and mournful cry,—
A cry for the calf she's, ne'er, forgot,—
They took from her side, oh, why?

Yet, Peggy her milk, (as thick as cream And sweet as the flowers of spring,) Gives free to us all; and brightly beam Her eyes as her tail doth swing

O'er velvety haunch to flirt off flies, (So saucy in summer time,) And, then, Peggy lists, with looks so wise, The tune of the milking chime:

The star, on her forehead, snowy-white, Shines out in the gloaming dim, Eclipsing the light of the lantern bright, Hung high on the stanchion's rim:

Yes, Peggy, I love you, well, my lass, And when comes the winter bold, I'll give you fresh grain, instead of grass, And shield you from frost and cold!

TO THE FOX SPARROW

The snow lay white as ermine
On roof and turf and tree;
And, tho' 'twas spring,
I saw no thing
That springlike seemed to me!

The winter birds were feeding,
As they had done, each day,—
The chickadee,
So full of glee,
And juncos, soft and gray!

When, lo! a strain of music, (The sweetest, e'er, I heard,) From out the tree, Swelled, full and free,— The song of some new bird!

I looked to see a sparrow
Upon the cedar bough;
How bulged his throat
As burst each note!
I see it, even now!

And, oh, such joy and gladness
As from his mouth did pour!
And, then, I knew
It must be true
That spring had come, once more!

Each wee, short while, in rapture,
Throughout that Sunday drear,
His song rang out
To show no doubt
Had he that spring were here!

A week he stayed to cheer me, And, then, I missed him, sore,— That sparrow sweet I hope to meet, When autumn comes, once more!

For, twice a year, a traveller In other lands to bide, He, here, doth rest, Ere off to nest He wings his way so wide!

God keep thee, fair Fox Sparrow, And guide thy wand'ring way Until thy call Hear I, next fall, Some morn, at peep of day!

SWEET SANGAMON

Sweet Sangamon singing, (in clear, minor key,) A love story, ringing o'er hillside and lea,

I would I might listen, some day, to thy song, As bright thy waves glisten bed graveled along!

You sing of a lover, gaunt, awkward, but true, Whose spirit doth hover, fair river, by you,

Because, by bluffs grassy, where purl thy waves free,
He wooed a sweet lassie, 'neath sycamore tree!

And, there, the twain studied, she, grammar, he, law,
While soft the boughs budded and smiled, as they
saw!

When, then, sunset's glory your flood turned to gold,
He lisped Love's sweet story, new, ever, tho' old,

Each youthful face beaming in evening's soft light, While, on flowed you, seeming unweeting day's flight!

Great Abe was the wooer; Ann Rutledge, the fair; And, ne'er, was man truer to girl of gold hair!

When springtime comes smiling with blossom and bee, Thy voice, Stream, beguiling, is heard o'er the lea,

In notes the lad listed, when, sweetheart to meet, He rode by thee, twisted in coils, at his feet,

His eye softly sparkling o'er scenes, near and far, As, Stream, thou flowed darkling o'er each pebbly bar!

But, when comes December, (with cold, storm and blast,)
With wails, you remember Abe's grief, long to last!

His grief for her lying 'neath old, forest trees, Past which thou art flying, Stream, swept by the breeze!

You knew she was dying, so sweet and so brave! You lover saw lying by Ann's grassy grave! You sang him, (there, weeping,) a comforting song, As, past her tomb sweeping, you hurried along!

Now, both lie a-sleeping but few miles apart, And, Stream, thou art keeping a watch o'er each heart!

Sweet Sangamon, ever, hie on o'er thy bed, And cease singing, never, a dirge for the dead!

FALLEN LEAVES

North from my cosy cottage lie Acres of chestnut trees, Green 'neath the dome of springtime's sky, Gay with bright birds and bees:

Closely they stand like warriors true, (Clad in their garb of green,) Waving their spears toward yonder blue, Where Captain Sun is seen:

Gayly they hail him, each clear day, "Phoebus, the Lord of Light!" Singing to him a martial lay, When cometh storm and night:

Toss tasteful tassels, in June-time, High, on each helmet's crown, Turning to prickly pompons prime Bursting with buttons brown;

But, when the shining buttons brown, Kissed by the fierce Frost King, Drop from each faded helmet crown, Sallow and shrivelled, swing

Ev'ry caped coat, (once, green and gay,)
Down from each soldier's form,
Showing his figure, gaunt and gray,
Made to withstand the storm:

Flutter the banners, (once, so fair,)
Down to their earthly bed;
Soundeth a requiem thro' the air
Played for the honored dead:

Then, 'twixt the trees, (so bare, now, grown,)
See I the hills of blue;—
Spy I the charming, wooded cone,
Clearly, within my view:

Thus, like the sight of yonder hill, Given when the leaflets fall, Be the sweet scene our souls shall thrill, When on the Lord we call, Asking of Him to strip away,
(Just as He strips each leaf,)
Out of our souls the sins that slay,—
Out of our hearts each grief!

Then, shall the scene of Zion fair, (When from all sin we're free,) Like to Blue Hill, thro' woodlands bare, Grand and inspiring be!

VESPER SONG

Now that hath come the Maytime fair, Now that the grass is green, Now that the trees, so lately bare, Clothed in fresh leaves are seen, Ere comes the night, go I out for a stroll, Loitering long on the crest of the knoll,

Gazing beyond to where, so clear,
Kissed by the setting sun,
Stand out the hills, to me so dear,
Precious, yes, ev'ry one,
Crowned by a halo of red, fair and bright,
Ere sets in gloom the fast on-coming night!

And, as I look in deep delight,
Sweet, on my listening ear,
Breaks a glad voice from yonder height,
There, in that coppice near,
Song of the merry, brown thrush, who, on high,
Pours out his soul 'neath the calm, evening sky!

Varied the air, distinct each note,
Joyous that vesper hymn,
Bursting from out that feathered throat,
Just as the day grows dim,
Bidding me, too, to sing praise to the Lord
Who all the blessings of life doth afford!

Like to a Moslem, who, to prayers, Calls from his turret high, He, in the cassock brown he wears, Out from the tree doth cry, Turning his head, in his zeal, all around, So each believer may list the glad sound!

Then, do I look within my soul,— See I the sin that's there,— Pray I the Lord to make it whole, Stainless, and white and fair, Ere pass I home with a song in my heart Which trust I, never, from it will depart! Tiny, brown-surpliced Singer free, Rather I'd hear your song, Up, in the choir-loft of your tree, Where you, by choice, belong, Than prima donnas, (to you I might name,) Singing for riches, for honor and fame!

For, little Bird, in russet dressed, You sing for naught but love! Bubbles your song from out your breast Up to your God Above, Thanking Him, truly, for all He hath done Since early morn till the set of the sun!

KATHLEEN

In the old-time Kerry County, forty years ago, tonight, ...

I was strolling with my sweetheart in the moonbeams' mystic light;

High above us mountains towered; down below

Killarney gleamed, Kathleen ch how beight

Blue as were the eyes of Kathleen; oh, how bright, that night, they seemed!

There, I placed upon her finger, as we halted, hand in hand,

Just a simple, little circlet,—just a tiny, golden band,—

Just the badge of true betrothal 'twixt myself and Kathleen sweet,

Whom, I hoped, within a twelvemonth, I could make my own helpmeet;

Then, she plucked a shamrock shining, bright bedecked with evening dew,

Pinned it on my woolen waistcoat, (I had bought, that morning, new,)

Asking me to keep the token,—wear it next my beating heart

Till the time I came to claim her, nevermore, on earth to part;

For, across the waste of waters, to the land beyond the sea,

I was bound to make my fortune,—make a home for Kate and me; To the music of Killarney, lapping on its sandy

shore, 'Long the lake we strolled in silence, on that sacred

night of yore;
With the moonlight on her forehead, and the love-

light in her eyes,
Ah! how beautiful my Darling 'neath the starry,
summer skies!

Then, both vowing faith eternal, at her father's cabin door,

Lovely Kathleen left I weeping, tho' I kissed her, o'er and o'er:

Near where fall the misty moonbeams on Killarney's placid breast,—

Where the waves make murm'ring music,—there, my Love, now, lies at rest!

There, they laid her, low, one dawning, ere I'd

I was working hard at winning in the mines, so damp and cold!

Stranger, see you, now, her Michael, broken-hearted, old and gray,

Waiting for the happy moment when he, too, shall pass away;

But, say, Stranger, when you bear him to the kirkyard, on his bier,

Place upon his breast this shamrock, he hath kept this many a year.

Faded, now, and dry and brittle, but, which, once, was fresh and bright,

When sweet Kathleen on his bosom pinned it, their betrothal night!

THOUGHTS ON THE AUTUMN SEASON

The longed for autumn's come, at last, With luscious fruit, so fair;—
With huntsmen's merry, bugle blast, Re-echoing on the air,
And asters smiling on their stalk
Along each leafy, woodland walk!

The woodbine spreads her robes of red O'er boulders, old and gray; The mountain ash rears high its head, With berries bright and gay, And ragweed candelabra raise Their lamps to light the rural ways!

How fair upon yon hill the view!
How cool and fresh the air!
How clear the arching dome of blue
With color, ev'rywhere,
In grass and flower and leaf of gold
Which autumn gayly doth unfold!

Then, loose the lurcher from his lair,
And don thy buff-skin suit!
Upon thine arm thy rifle bear,
And, in thy high-topped boot,
Advance thou 'neath the wildwood shade,
Ere all the forest beauties fade!

But, pause, thou sportsman, ere thou take Thine aim yon deer to slay! Think twice, ere, in the bush or brake, You, lifeless, rabbits lay! Take not a life for sport, alone! For that there's nothing can atone!

Yet, wander thro' the wood, at will, And whistle to thy dog! Wind loud thy horn upon the hill, Or, by the cranberry bog! Enjoy the splendor of the day, But, shoot thou not for merest play!

Ah! nothing's like the autumn air,
And naught is like its sun;
And naught is like its welkin fair,—
Its leafage gold and dun;—
Its fruits and flowers, so radiant bright,
All made by God to please our sight!

This autumn, bringing in its train So many blessings sweet, (For instance, such refreshing rain A-foll'wing drought and heat,) Oh, let us welcome, Friends, with song, And pray it tarry, late and long!

A DUTIFUL DAUGHTER

In Rome, long centuries ago,
A nobleman offended
The Emperor and made a foe
Of him whom he attended;
So, in a dungeon, dark and deep,
The man was flung to moan and weep:

The Ruler, (it is said,) decreed That, in this dungeon dreary, The nobleman should stay, indeed, Till he became quite weary Of calling out for meat or bread, For, nevermore, should he be fed:

Tho' he became but skin and bone, Should any one, whoever, Him give to eat, the worst death known Would pay his kind endeavor; And, in the cell, where he was cast, The man was bound with fetters, fast:

When he'd been, there, for ten days' space, And morsel none had tasted, The tears ran down his agéd face,— Down o'er his bosom wasted, And to the gods his pleading cry Made tearful ev'ry kindly eye:

His piteous cry, by night and day,
Was constantly heard ringing;
But, none, (his hunger to allay,)
Was seen one crumb a-bringing;
And, tho' he'd sev'ral daughters fair,
To brave the ruler none did dare:

But, he'd one child, (a daughter, too,)
Who 'gainst his mind had married,
And, when her father's fate she knew,
At home, no more, she tarried,
But, went her sisters to entreat
That they would send their parent meat:

Her sisters, all, refused to do
What she besought, so madly;
So, leaving them, this daughter true
To prison hurried, sadly,
To speak with him,—her father dear,
But, given was she no entrance, here:

So, to the Emperor she flew, And, on her knees a-flinging, This daughter, dutiful and true, Her hands before her wringing, Begged she her sire might, once more, see That from his curse she freed might be:

The ruler granted her request, (On this one, sole condition,)
Each day, should she, (at his behest,)
Before she gained admission,
Be searched to see no drink or meat
She bore her suff'ring sire to eat:

So, for her father, so distressed,
No food she carried, ever,
But, with the milk from out her breast
She nourished him, and, never,
Was seen a prisoner in a cell
So fat, so fair, so strong and well:

Yet, in the dungeon, dark and drear, With terror she upbounded, And pallid grew her cheek, for fear, (If but a step resounded,) The keeper, with his watchful eye, Should learn the secret, passing by:

For twelve, long months, and, e'en, a day, She, thus, her father nourished; But, none imagined in what way; None guessed how 'twas he flourished, Until the ruler, great and grand, Much musing, it did understand:

He much admired the noble deed Of this young dame devoted, Who, breaking not his law, did feed The sire on whom she doted; So, pard'ning him, he honors poured Upon the daughter of the lord

Who'd cast her off because that she Against his wish had wedded, But, whom, now, dear as life, held he, (This happy man, gray-headed,) A-blessing, all his days, the hour When fled she to her nuptial bower:

To spread abroad the woman's fame,
The ancient Romans builded
A splendid temple to her name,
Of rarest marble, gilded,
And she, who wed in mean estate,
Was crowned with riches, grand and great.

THE OUTLAW'S OFFER

Rode the rough freebooter, far, on his mare, Over the bright-blooming heather, Waving to those who to follow did dare, Stormy and cold tho' the weather:

Plund'ring the farmers, by burn and by brae;— Ere they awaked, onward, speeding; Such was strong Jimmie Mcpherson's strange way; Such was the life he was leading,

When, after many attempts, caught was he;—
(He, with his foll'wers confiding,)
As, o'er the highlands of Scotland, in glee,
Once, on a raid he was riding:

While, for a season, in prison, he lay, (There, in his cell, dark and dreary,) Jimmie composed a short song, blithe and gay, All to an air bright and cheery:

Then, being brought to atone for his sin, Crowds, at the place, him surrounding, Played he the tune on his loved violin, Clear, on the zephyrs resounding:

After the strains died away on the air, Boldly, the outlaw demanded If there were present a friend who would care, From its rash owner, red-handed, Just as a gift, his dear fiddle to take; But, no one forward a-going, He the frail instrument on his knee brake, Round him the fragments a-throwing:

Soon, there swung, high, on the tall gallows-tree, Rover and robber, marauder, Who might have been, had he chosen to be, Maybe, a bard of the border!

KNIGHTHOOD

In feudal days of long ago,
When might made right,
When each stood ready with his bow,
By day or night,
When petty barons held in fief
The castles of some stronger chief,
And few were better than a thief
In God's clear sight,

There, still, were some whose bosoms bled At what they heard;— Whose noble hands grew, never, red At a hasty word, But, who, in armor shining bright, (Reflecting rays of silver light,) To right some wrong, in tourney fight, Had, ne'er, demurred:

These knights of golden chain and spur Have passed away;
Their deeds our hearts but little stir,
Dear Friends, today;
But, in these more enlightened days,
There, yet, live those on whom we gaze,
In deep delight, and sing their praise
In tuneful lay;

No gleaming Milan mail they wear,— No helmet plume; No sword or battle-axe they bear,— No pride assume; But, o'er each broad and manly chest Truth's glitt'ring corselet light doth rest, And pity in each kindly breast Finds ample room:

To hold high office in the land
And honest be,
To keep the heart by courage fanned,
To clearly see,
And, then, to do the thing that's right
Is grander in our Saviour's sight
Than arming for the bloody fight,
It seems to me:

Ye Statesmen, all, who work for Peace, Of ye I sing!
The good ye do shall, never, cease, And, surely 'll bring
Much happiness to all the earth,—
To those of high or lowly birth!
A gift it is of greater worth
Than anything!

Such men as these of whom I speak
Are modern Knights!
They, too, defend the poor and weak
And guard their rights!
All honor to their hearts of gold!
Their many virtues manifold!
May, long, such champions station hold
On Freedom's Heights!

LINES WRITTEN ON THE RECEIPT OF SOME APPLES

(Dedicated to my Aunts, Frances and Eleanor)

Many thanks for the fairies you sent, In their rough, wooden carriage close pent! Tho' they rode eighty miles, (maybe, more,) They arrived, safe and sound, at my door; On their beautiful bodies I found Ne'er a bruise, scratch or tiniest wound; And, tho' never a word could they speak, (As I gazed on each round, ruddy cheek,) Felt I sure that I knew their intent,-That I read the kind message you sent, For, they smiled, and their breath, pure and sweet, Rose, like incense, my nostrils to greet; When I buried my teeth in each heart, Felt I mine was a murderer's part; Yet, their flesh, juicy, soft, snowy white, Filled my soul with the deepest delight:

As I look on each bright, dimpled face,—
On each figure, so fair, full of grace,
In mind's eye, I can see where they grew,—
The gnarled apple-tree, laden with dew;—
Dainty sprites from the leaves peeping out,
On each lip, e'er, a smile, ne'er, a pout;
I can see the neat house, long and low,
In whose garden fair flowers brightly blow;
Thro' the clear, kitchen casements, so clean,
My two, dear, widowed aunts may be seen,
Their slight forms flitting, here, and, now, there,
In their print, mourning gowns and white hair;—
Faithful dog, by the door, in a dream;—
'Cross the road, the old mill, o'er the stream,

Giving out that low, dull, droning sound, As its saws swiftly whirl, round and round; Then, at hour of high noon, I can see Good, old Rover, the dog, full of glee, As Aunt Eleanor ties his neck strong, With a strip of white cloth, stout and long, And he trots to the mill, as a sign That 'tis time for the household to dine On a dinner of veg'tables green. And the best berry-pie, e'er, was seen; While to crown the feast, simple tho' fine, Are those beauteous fairies of mine, In the fruit basket, blushing as red As old Phoebus preparing for bed:

Thanks, again, my dear Aunts, for the fruit Which an epicure, surely, might suit! May it grow, many years, on your lands, Watched and tended by your adroit hands, You repaying, a thousand times one, For all trouble it's given and done!

THE SHEPHERD'S SONG

My heart's in the heather, Where browseth the roe, When comes the spring weather We shepherds all know!—

When o'er the wild mountains
Upcurleth the mist,
And all the hill fountains
By Phoebus are kissed!—

When, up from the heather, To usher the day, The lark breaks his tether And soareth away!

My heart's in the heather, Where peacefully feed My lambkins together, Whilst pipe I my reed!

The breeze feel I shifting My bonnet awry! The clouds I see drifting Like ships in the sky!

I lie on the heather, So blue and so bright; My heart as a feather, Forever, is light! And, comes it up rainy, By way of the burn, To bonny, sweet Jeanie, At eve, I return!

Wrapped well in my plaiddie, The storm to defy, There, ne'er, was a laddie As happy as I!

My heart's in the heather, Ben Nevis below, Whatever the weather, Rain, sunshine or snow!

OCTOBER

No murmur broke the silence, Upon the distant hill, Save chirps of blithesome crickets brown And ripened acorns dropping down Beside the voiceless rill:

Along the quiet roadway,
I saw the goldenrod
With queenly head now flaked with frost,
Which, once, in pride, she gayly tossed
Above the verdant sod:

There, too, brown eyes of asters, From faded fringes, gazed On yonder cloudless vault of blue, So wondrous fair to the flowerets few Who looked on all, amazed:

And, as, entranced, I lingered Along the blossomed bed, I saw the scarlet maples lean Against the sturdy pine-trees green, Like lovers newly wed:

No breeze stirred limb or leaflet; No note of bird was heard; For, croaking crow and jeering jay Would not disturb the perfect day By scolding sound or word:

The sumach glowed in glory,
With leaves of brilliant red
Far redder than yon, huge brush-fire
Whose tongues of flame flared faster, higher,
Demanding to be fed:

Whilst I, there, stood, admiring The splendor of the sky,— The beauty of the forest old, (Adorned in crimson, green and gold,) I raised mine eyes on high

To where the fire was writhing Like snakes in death's dread throe, And, then, I thought of th' angel tall, With flaming sword, who manned the wall Of Eden, long ago;

As God's most mighty servant Drove Eve from Eden fair, The forest fire, with blazing blade, Drove me, in fear, from out the glade, On this bright day, so rare:

October, blue October, The Indian Summer sweet, Oh, let thy curtains, clear and blue, So matchless fair in tint and hue, Mine eye, long seasons, greet!

And let thy golden sunshine
Us charm until the birth
Of gray November's days, so chill,
Which ev'ry heart with gloom do fill,
Destroying joy and mirth!

October, gold October,
Oh, loiter with us long!
And, for all pleasures you us bring
Your loving praises, here, we'll sing!
We'll tell thy worth in song!

THE BELLE OF THE BOG

When the reaper comes, like Father Time, (With his scythe, so long and keen,) To mow down the grasses, in their prime, Wearing tassled caps of green,

Then, my soul grows sad to see the sight, And I tremble at the thought That my darling blossoms, gay and bright, To their deaths will, soon, be brought:

The marsh marigold is let alone In her low and boggy bed; On the swamp azalea, widely known, Dreaded mower doth not tread:

Arethusa, like the nymph of old Hiding deep in marshes wet, The grim reaper, with his foll'wers bold, To my rapture, doth forget: But, 'mong troops of leaves, (tall soldiers trim,)
With their trusty daggers drawn,
The rare Louis Lily nods to him,
In the witching Junetime morn;

He dares, now, not desecrate her shrine, Yet, he looks upon her face And the straight dragoons who stand in line Round their queen's damp hiding-place;

But, he swears the time will, surely, come, (And that hour he'll, patient, bide,) When the lovely Belle of the Bog, struck dumb, He shall bear away,—his bride:

So, whene'er I see the swamp grow dry, And the heat of midday's sun Make the green dragoons, that death defy, Become yellow, sere and dun,

I fear much the mower and his men, With sharp scythes hung high on arm, Who gaze out across the grassy fen, And who mean my flower great harm:

Ah! at last, they come to meadow hall! Body guard, grown old and bent, One by one, round blue-eyed blossom fall, To no death-cry giving vent;

And the reaper grasps the lily rare, As the Romans, long ago, Seized the sprightly Sabine maidens fair, In the way my readers know;

But, ere home he hies, at dewy eve, Plucks the reaper from his hat An unsightly thing, he can't believe On a throne could, once, have sat;

The fair Fleur-de-lis, of royal birth, Like a withered hag, all see; And, with scorn, is flung upon the earth The bright Belle of the Boggy Lea!

Oh, thou regal Lily, Louis Grand Chose his country's blossom sweet, May you bring not to your native land Such a fate as that you meet!

THE PASSING OF WINTER

Up rose old Winter, bent and white, And shook his beard of snow;— Hooked on his icy armor bright, And said that he must go, For, on the meadow's withered breast The grass was growing green, And, on yon hillock's rugged crest A harebell had he seen;

On yonder, leafless apple-tree
A bluebird plumed his wing,
And, thro' the moorlands, gay and free,
The brooklet bright did sing:

So, with his hand, (no longer, young,) He grasped his staff of oak, (To which last season's leaflets clung,) When from his breath there broke

A bugle blast, loud, clear and shrill, And from his hair there fell A few, small snowflakes on the rill And on the wee harebell;

But, at the blast, the snowbirds bright Close nestled in his beard, And, toward the north, old Winter white, (With all his pets endeared,)

Crept on with feeble steps and slow, Wan, weary, pale and weak, Till on his brow began to blow The polar blizzards bleak;

Then, rosy grew his pallid cheek, And brilliant beamed his eye; No more, a grandsire, wan and weak, (The storms to, there, defy,)

But, strong and sturdy, once again, A soldier of the snow, He'll fling the frost on moor and fen, And sing, "Heigh-ho! heigh-ho!"

We're glad, old Winter, you have fled! The springtime, now, we'd meet! And, soon, the summer days, instead, In turn, we all would greet!

But, when the autumn's passed away, (With joys it, e'er, doth bring,) We'll wish to see thy visage gay, And hear, "Heigh-ho!" you sing!

THE IRISH PEASANT'S SONG

Our home is nought but a cottage, Wife, But, to us 'tis a cosy nest; And, here, we've lived all our wedded life; God grant, here, we may spend the rest! One night, I, here, brought you home,—a bride, And you sat by the ingle-nook, Your cheeks with red of the roses dyed; I remember your ev'ry look!

I thought no bride was there, e'er, so fair As the one who was mine, that night, When firelight lay on thy shining hair, And on eyes that like stars were bright!

But, when the firelight doth, now, find rest On the ruffles about thy face,— 'Pon kerchief crossed on thy faithful breast, In thy looks there's an added grace!—

A grace which you to the cot impart, For, wherever your foot doth tread, A ray of sunshine seems soft to start Like the shamrock from out its bed!

At morn, with joy, to my work away, Once, I went, in my youth so strong, Met, e'er, by thee, at the close of day, With a smile and a snatch of song!

No sweeter greeting could lordly earl Receive, e'er, from his lady fair, In gown of lace, with a rope of pearl Twisted all thro' her raven hair!

And blacker far were thy tresses fair, Tied with ribbons of bonny blue, Than hers with fillets of jewels rare Twined their coils and their braids all thro'!

The gorse to gold hath turned fifty times Since it blossomed along the way, The morn the kirk-bells rang out their chimes, On our beautiful wedding-day;

And we are lovers as much, dear Heart, As, when kneeling before God's shrine, We swore to love until death should part, And we've kept to our oath, Love mine!

In joy or grief, all our married life, Your kind heart's been my home, alway! It's you, and not the old cabin, Wife, I must eulogize most, today!

But, far less blest would we be, elsewhere, Than we are in this cot, my Own, (The brine's sweet breath on the breezes rare From the far-away bogs, here, blown,) Where, oft, I dream of the babies twain, (Both born, here, when we two were young,) And where is brought, down the narrow lane, The light prattle of each wee tongue

Of the lad and lass, who, now, far away, Send, unfailingly, weekly wage That we may dwell in the cot of clay, In our feeble, yet, glad old-age!

SPRINGTIME FLOWERS

The gloomy winter's end is near;
Yon giant trees, in woeful fear,
Their naked arms uptoss,
As shrieks the blast their boughs among
Like legion howling demons hung
On limbs grown gray with moss:

But, never fear! 'twill, soon, be time, 'Neath fairer skies, at chebec chime, In grove and grotto green, By brooklet's brink, 'neath shelt'ring tree, The modest wildflower fair to see,—Our forest, fairy queen!

And, when we find each gracile form, Our hearts will throb,—our blood grow warm; We'll deem it wrong to tear From native haunts such vestals sweet,— Pure hamadryads, whom we greet With low obeisance rare:

In hollows of the wildwood wide
The yellow adder's tongue doth hide,
Caressed by sunlight pale,
(Which filters thro' the budding trees,)
And watched, as sways she in the breeze,
By leaves that never quail:

The trillium, with petals white,
(Which make wood-borders gleam with light,)
'Mong leafy whorls of green,
Like Venus fair appears when she
Arose from out the shining sea,
And, first, by man was seen:

The bloodroot's spotless beauty fair, So fragile, transitory, rare, Which wilts at nature's frown! Unless we watch with jealous eye, She, shattered by the storm, will lie, In torn and tumbled gown: When redwings trill their liquid lays,
The violet, in silence, prays;
And, e'er, her visage meek,
(From which the love of God shines out,)
Looks earthward, in a way devout,
With tears upon her cheek:

Spring beauties, blushing by the brink
Of brawling brooks, whose dew they drink,
Shut up their gentle eyes,
And sleep upon their leafy throne,
Whene'er the days are dark and lone,
Till bright to-morrows rise:

The mayflower, with its clustered blooms, Which, 'neath the rugged pine, perfumes The raw and chilly air, Seems all too weak to breast the wind Which stirs the withered leaves close twined About its stems with care:

Which will you crown the queen of all? The sweet spring beauty, pink and tall? The violet, so blue, (Mahomet's chosen blossom bright?) Or the arbutus, pink and white, Bedecked with dripping dew?

They all are lovely, I confess; But, she, adorned in rosy dress, (The Pilgrims' floweret fair,) To me is one of those most sweet, And one we far would go to greet, And home, in handfuls, bear!

NOVEMBER

Our surly, old acquaintance, November, is our guest; We do not bid him tarry; We dare not bid him rest!

He, never yet, was welcome, For, at his biting breath, The blossoms fold their petals And close their eyes in death:

The leaves scud fast before him To seek a hiding-place; From hollow trees the squirrels Peep out to scan his face: Whene'er he blows his trumpet, Thick clouds of sombre gray, Like serried ranks of soldiers, Make dark the dreary day:

At his approach, the streamlets
Put on a smile of scorn,
For, much they fear his fetters
May bind them, ere the morn:

He moans among the willows; He roars upon the sea; He whistles down the chimney To startle you and me:

The song-birds fear his presence, And, at his advent, fly; Tho' crows, his blackguard courtiers, His praise from tree-tops cry:

And, yet, is he an artist
Renowned the wide world o'er;
No human skill can equal
The pictures he can draw:

And, tho' he strips the leaflets
From birch and maple tree,
He shows the grace and beauty
In branches bare and free:

He drives the mists and vapors From marsh and deep morass; He purifies the water And makes it clear as glass:

He slays the vile mosquitoes
Which summer sleep annoy;
He puts to death the locusts
Our harvests might destroy:

From hair and beard, so hoary, He showers, thro' the night, A counterpane of crystals That gleam like jewels bright;

And, when, with frosty fingers,
He touches yonder wood,
The forest kings becometh
A white-robed brotherhood:

Besides, he brings the gayest,
The best loved day of the year,—
Thanksgiving Day, so blesséd,
So full of joy and cheer:

Oh, dreary, old November, I think I've changed my mind! I guess I like you better, As I your virtues find!

So, as I hug the hearthstone And hear your cheery voice, I'll ask you just to enter And take of chairs your choice!

MY GOOD MOTHER

With her soft, thick hair, (white as driven snow,)
Combed away from her low, broad brow,
And her sunken cheeks, (which were ruddy, once,)
But, are pale as the snowdrops, now,
At the early daybreak,
My good Mother's awake,

Upon frosty mornings, she builds the fire, When the rest lie in sleep profound; And her luscious coffee and omelet light I can smell when I list the sound Of the loud, breakfast bell, That I know, oh, so well, As I leap from my bed at a bound:

Putting hands to the family plough:

Then, her clothes are white as, e'er, swung the

And her cake and her biscuits brown
Are full fine enough any prince to please;
And, with, ne'er, on her face a frown,
O'er the sick ones she bends,
And her sympathy lends,
Tho' her heart in her bosom sinks down:

When her fevered feet and her aching back
She may rest, just an hour, or so,
She a stocking snatches to mend a rent,
Or, on something some stitches few
She most carefully takes,
As the swirling snowflakes
On the pane beat a pleasant tattoo:

Then, when supper is o'er, and the poultry fed,
And my Sire on the couch doth doze,
Her poor, tired frame in a rocking-chair,
(Our old dog at her side, with nose
Resting close to her feet,)
She takes, truly, a treat
Reading how in the world each thing goes:

As the years creep on, and her cheerful face, Here, before me, I see, each day, My affection deeper and stronger grows, And I feel that there's naught can pay For the strength she hath spent And the love she hath lent But to strew on the rest of her way

All the truest love which can hold my heart;
And I'll do so from this day bright,
Till her work shall fall from her patient hands,
And her sweet, gentle face shall light
With a smile, when she sees,
Borne on wings of the breeze,
Death's fair Angel in raiment of white!

DRINKING AT THE TROUGH

Beneath a drooping, old elm-tree, In Sharon Village Square, An iron wat'ring trough you'll see Like others found elsewhere:

From out its depths, up towards the sky, A standard, straight and strong, Bears four large signs, (to passers-by Four friends that speak no wrong;)

They tell the distance, point the way To strangers from afar Who seek some goal, ere fades the day And gleams the evening star:

Thro' days of summer's scorching heat, This trough, beneath the tree, Is just the place where ever meet The friends most loved by me:

Here, comes the prancing dappled-gray, (My lady's pet, so fair,) Tricked out in russet harness gay Bedecked with silver rare:

Here, hastes the working-horse, so strong, With sweat-stained side and flank, Who never heard the rippling song The brook sings 'neath its bank;

The sweetest song he ever hears
Is that his comrades make
A-drinking at the trough he nears
Like deer the forest lake:

Two minutes at the trough to rest Beneath the grateful shade; One, long, deep draught,—earth's purest, best For horse or humans made:

And, thus they stand the trough beside,— The work-horse with his wain, The pleasure-steed with glossy hide And flowing, jetty mane;

Like brothers, (as they are,) stand they;—
(No pride or envy, there,—)
The dusty draught-horse and the gray
With shining skin so fair:

Then, off starts each upon his way, Again, to never meet, But, maybe, at the close of day, Each dreams of draught so sweet.

HUNTING FOR THE SLIPPER

Hunting for the slipper,
Ah! what joyous fun!
In the dewy morn,
When the day is born,
And the dreary night is done:

Hunting for the slipper,
In the month of May,
When the robins sing
And the bellworts ring
Of the birth of happy day:

Hunting for the slipper,
Not a modern one,
Made of leather brown,
Dyed to match your gown,
Fit to wear when fast you run:

Hunting for the slipper, And, if it you tear, Ne'er, you'll cobbler find, Mending, to your mind, Smallest rent in slipper rare:

Hunting for the slipper!
There, it waits for thee!
In the breeze it swings,
Lacings brown, like wings,
Flutt'ring fast in zephyrs free!

Hunting for the slipper!
Such a tiny shoe!
Far too small, I know,
For your little toe,
And all bright with drops of dew!

Hunting for the slipper,
(Where the fairies roam,)
Of the kind, at night,
In the pale moonlight,
That they wear in wildwood home!

Hunting for the slipper!
Yes, my naughty Nell,
Of a flower I speak,
In my poor way weak,
Which you'll find in yonder dell!

'Tis the Lady's Slipper,
Fair in form and hue,
Blushing bright at sight
Of Aurora's light,
'Neath the springtime sky of blue!

OPEN, WIDE, YE GATES!

Ye glorious Gates of Beauty, So close to the Shining Sea, Deep set in those Walls of Jasper, Oh, open, thou, wide, for me!

Oh, grant beatific vision
Thou gavest to bards of old,—
Which Jacob, once, saw, in slumber,
When earth from his eyes off-rolled!

And, clear thro' the azure ether, Life's Ladder I'll see, so bright, That reaches from here to Heaven,— To Realms of Eternal Light!

Up which I shall see a-climbing, (Towards Portal which stands ajar,) That radiant, white-robed Angel Who wears 'bove his brow a star;—

Who bears, (in his arms, so tender,)
Close-pressed to his spotless breast,
The souls who from earth are lifted
To the land of sweet, endless Rest!

And, oh, let me list the music
That bursts from the seraph throng,
When, foll'wing the steps of Jesus,
They haste on their way along

Towards Throne of the Holy Temple, Where, washed in Life's Crystal Stream, They fall on their knees, and, prostrate, Praise offer to God Supreme!

Oh, Guard of the Gate, glimpse, only, Is all which I beg of thee!
Oh, ope jewelled Door, one moment,
That I Golden Street may see!

That I, as I journey onward,
May hear in my soul the song
That's sung by the Ransomed Pilgrims
Who, now, to the Lord belong!

GOODBY TO THE BIRDS

I can hear the squirrels scolding
In the woodland toward the east;
They a conclave must be holding
'Bout the coming chestnut feast;

And a phoebe heard I calling
In the wildwood, yesterday,
As the first dry leaves were falling
In the forest, old and gray;

As he, "Phoe-be!" thrice repeated, Still stood I to list his cry, Ere to work I back retreated, Saying, "Phoebe, Dear, goodby!

"Thou hast cheered me, many a morning, With thy music, sad, yet, gay! Now, three times, you've given me warning That you're going far away!—

"Searching out a warmer region, Where the sun shines clear and bright, Travelling on, with comrades legion, Thro' the silent, starry night!—

"In the daytime, often, resting, Getting, e'en, a bit to eat; In the dark, the blast a-breasting With thy tiny pinions fleet!

"By no chart or compass, Phoebe, Are you guided on your way, Yet, you'll reach, with Swift and Pewee, Havens fair, without delay! "Catbird, Kingbird, Firebird, dearly Have I loved each one of you, When I heard your notes ring clearly Yonder copse or thicket thro'!

"I shall miss your solos cheery!
I shall miss your figures fair,
When the days grow dark and dreary
And the snow lies ev'rywhere!

"But, the Winter Birds,—your cousins, Soon, will come my soul to cheer! I shall see them, by the dozens, When the days dawn dun and drear!

"Juncos, who have been so hardy As to nest on mountains high, Here, to come will not be tardy, When with snow is dark the sky!

"So, ye Summer Birds, God speed ye
To your home beyond the sea!
He will keep and He will feed ye,
Till ye come, once more, to me!"

SONNET TO A PINE OF THE NORTH

Pine Tree, which, in patience, waiteth In the forest dim for me, When the merry redpolls mateth, Then, dear Love, I'll haste to thee!—

Haste to meet thee, when the sunlight Gilds thy swaying spire with gold, Tho' the darksome hues of midnight, Even then, thy feet enfold!

How I long to lie, at leisure, On the needles round thy feet! How I long to catch a measure Of the song you sing so sweet!

Where thy mighty thighs lie vested In their mossy breeches gray, There, the warrior brave hath rested From the chase, or, from the fray!

By thy titan trunk he hovered, (With his sweetheart, passing fair,) In his marten mantle covered And his moccasins of hare;

She with feathers bright a-bobbing
From the brow-band of her crest;
With the windflowers white a-nodding
On her pure, tho' bronzéd breast:

So, when windflowers fair are smiling In the country where I dwell, Then, I know they you're beguiling With their ways you love so well:

And, some spring, when stand you pond ring On what say these blossoms white, I shall northward go a-wand ring That I, too, may see the sight:

And, beneath thy shadow, daily, I shall sit and think of one, Who, long years ago, here, gayly, Came to woo, ere day was done:

Love's sweet dream for him is ended;— For this lover and his lass, But, 'neath him who them defended, Other lovers, yet, shall pass!

And, whilst 'neath thy boughs are plighted Vows for aye and aye to last, Bright their faces will be lighted Like those lovers' of the past!

Thus, fond wooers e'er defending, Dear, old Pine Tree, long may thee Stand with fragrant spindles bending O'er the windflowers 'bout thy knee!

May you stand, for many ages, Smiling, in the greenwood old, Till the hand, that penned these pages, Wastes in yonder mossy mould!

May you cast your cones, full-seeded, Sprouting saplings which may grow Into trees like thee, for, needed Are such forest kings, I trow!

Never may the woodman daring To thy bole his axe let fall, But, may you continue bearing Health and pleasure to us all!

THE THREE SLAVES

Long years ago, when the world was new, Man was given three slaves to work, Who've been well known, all the ages thro', Toil severe to never shirk:

Fire, Air and Water are names they bear Over all this earth so round; And, just as long as stout gyves they wear, Servants true they've all been found: Fire's cheeks are red as the rose's blush; Like the crackling bough, his voice; Active, his movements, and, in a rush Seems he, always, as from choice;

Brings he man warmth, when he's cold and chill;— Cooks his food and gives him light: Water his wells, drying up, doth fill, Making fields with barley bright:

Air drives his ships on the shining sea;—
Cools his brow in noonday's sun;—
Giving a gas to all mortals, free,
Without which their race were run:

But, man, beware! hold they henchmen three Fettered well, or, thou shalt rue, Deeply, the day when the Master thee Gavest slaves you deem so true!

Fire, tho' thy bread he may bake so brown, (Should you leave him, long, alone,) Over thy head may thy house burn down, Laughing loud to list your moan!

Water, (which, far on the desert dry, To the thirsty brings delight,) Bears the poor boatman the landing by, O'er the seething whirlpool white!

Air, which with oxygen rare is rife, To a blast, with ease, can rise, Piping a tune on his shrilly fife Till quite dead all nature lies!

So, tho' to steam you can water turn,—
Heat your hearths with lightning's gleam,
Man, be alert lest the lightnings burn!
Lest thy flesh doth scald the steam!

Water and Fire and the Air are thine Just so long as watch you keep! Strong, willing servants are they, in fine! But, take care! you mustn't sleep!

GUESS. THE VAGABOND

Down the walk went we together Toward the little garden gate, In old, "Frisco's" pleasant weather, Wond'ring why Papa was late:

Landmarks all were growing dimmer At the foot of Laurel Hill; Myriad stars commenced to glimmer, In the west, above the mill: Headstones, (in the graveyard, yonder,) Looked like spectres gowned in white; Gauzy moths began to wander Thro' the dewy, autumn night;

On we strolled, 'mid roses fragrant, Toward the fastened, garden gate Where a little, dusty vagrant Crouched, alone, in sorry state:

White was, once, his coat so woolly; Sad was, then, his eye of brown, And, when I had seen him, fully, Vanished from my face each frown:

Opening gate, without my calling, Entered tiny vagabond, As the mists of night were falling From the starry heights, beyond:

Looked the wand'rer so beseeching, In my heart I could not bear, Out, thro' darkness, far-off reaching, Him to turn without my care:

What his name was little vagrant Couldn't tell me, tho' he tried, As he sniffed the flowers fragrant Blooming, there, on ev'ry side;

So, I named him, "Guess," and, calling Him to me, I stroked his head; And, while dewy mists were falling, On some meat dear Guess I fed:

Many a romp had we, together, In those days long since gone by, And I can not answer whether Guess enjoyed them best, or I:

Friend more faithful child had, never, Than this wand'rer proved to be; And I'll not forget him, ever, Tho' a mongrel dog were he!

Often, now, when day's descending, And the evening star shines bright, Over Guess, the Waif, I'm bending, Patting pretty head so white!

FLOWERS OF THE FOREST

Flowers of the Forest, modest and fair, Naught in the world with thee can compare! Wooed by the breezes, kissed by the sun, Bathed by the dew when daylight is done, Looking to heaven, or, kneeling in prayer, Scatt'ring thine incense sweet thro' the air, High on the hilltop, low by the stream, Long may you ponder! Long may you dream!

Flowers of the Forest, fair in the face, None can thee rival clad in her lace! Tho' none behold thee save butterflies, Or, from the tree-tops, chipmonks so wise, Still, art thou happy! Still, art thou glad!—Never, complaining! Never, quite sad! Doing thy duty! Blooming thy best! Leaving the Lord to manage the rest!

Soft is the bed of mosses, so green, On which, at eve, you gracefully lean, Listening, in joy, to vesper lays sweet Tanagers red so gayly repeat! Where you awake at sound of the song Thrushes, above, trill loudly and long, When you begin to nod in the breeze, Waiting for calls from big bumble-bees!

Beating his drum, soon, one cometh near; But, at the sight, you, Flowers, have no fear! Seeking for honey, softly, he'll light Right in the face of her, the most bright! Loud are his notes which grate on your ear, But, how he loves your nectar, so clear! Powdered with pollen, off, then, he flies Some other bloom to, now, fertilize!

Thus, day by day, fair Flowers, are spent Lives, pure and simple, God hath you lent,—Flinging your fragrance out to the breeze, Sweet nectar giving any who please, Smiling on all who thro' the wood pass, Be she a queen, or, just a wee lass! Flowers of the Forest, fair, yet, heart-free, What would the wildwood be without thee?

VALE!

Dear Friends and Readers, fond and true, Who, at your fireside leisure, Have read this little volume thro', (I trust with some small pleasure;)

The time hath come, ('tis, here, to-day;)
When I must cease my singing;—
When I must on its wand'ring way,
"Farewell!" send clearly ringing:

Goodby, loved Friends, again, some day, To meet, perchance, to parley! "Adieu!" I can not, shall not say, But, "Health to Thee! Sweet Vale!"





Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process. Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide Treatment Date: Sept. 2009

Preservation Technologies A WORLD LEADER IN COLLECTIONS PRESERVATION 111 Thomson Park Drive Cranberry Township, PA 16066 (724) 779-2111



